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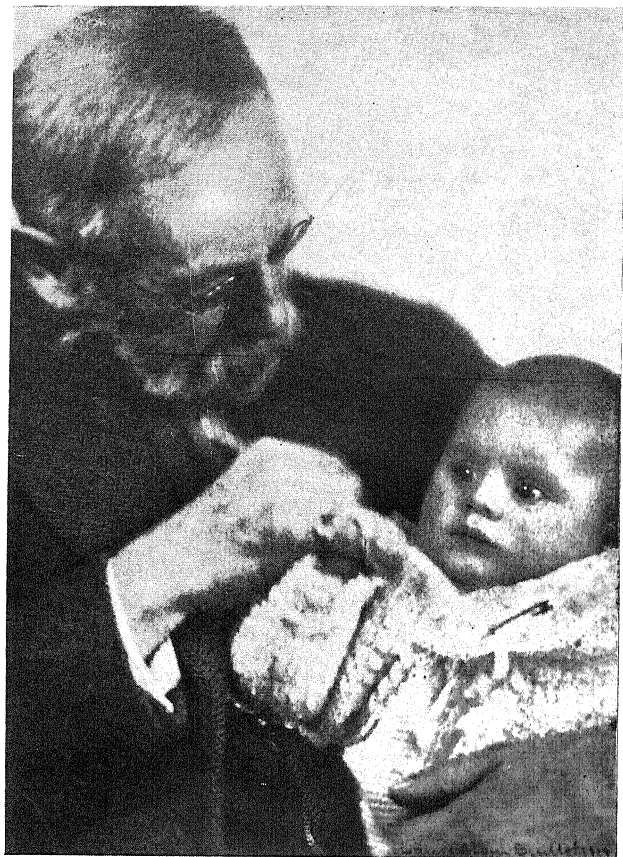


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FOR MY GRANDSON  
REMEMBRANCES OF AN ANCIENT  
VICTORIAN

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GRANDFATHER AND GRANDSON  
photographed by Mme. Laure Albin-Guillot, Paris, March 1929

FOR MY GRANDSON  
*Remembrances of an Ancient Victorian*

BY THE RT. HON.  
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Bt., K.C.

LONDON  
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D E D I C A T I O N  
F O R M Y G R A N D S O N

**S**OON after you were born your mother told me I ought to set down my remembrances for you : and to-day, March 13, 1929, being your sixth birthday reckoned in months, I begin to follow her advice by telling you why I thought it very good.

In every one's knowledge of the past there is a dark interval between the things he has been taught and the things he has observed, the region of events not old enough to be accounted for in the books of his youth, and not recent enough to be within his own memory : say some fifty years before and nine or ten after his birth. Young people are too full of the present and too eager for the future to think much upon this ; and their elders are often too busy or too idle to think of it for them. And yet this unfilled gap in a young person's knowledge of the past is a bad thing. If you have no acquaintance with your near ancestors, your remoter ones may seem to belong to a world so far off that you have nothing to do with it and next to nothing to learn from it. Now that would be a grave mistake, leading to troublesome consequences for yourself and others : as indeed has happened more than once, on a grand

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scale. So you must take my word for it that the times your grandfather lived in are worth your acquaintance, and I shall set down for you what I remember of the persons and matters that interested me in the latter part of the nineteenth and the earlier of the twentieth century. One thing I cannot do is to show you how we looked, what sort of beauty was admired, and how fashions changed ; but you can see it for yourself in the back volumes of *Punch*, drawn by many able and some really eminent artists. There also you will learn, more readily than anywhere else, what the greater part of fairly intelligent and instructed English people were thinking and expecting from time to time ; and if you make out for yourself, in the light of our later knowledge, how often they thought and guessed wrong, and some of the reasons for it, you will be well on the way to knowing how hard it is to be right, which is not the least of the beginnings of wisdom in general and the understanding of history in particular. This recommendation is quite serious.

When you read this, will there still be smart youngsters despising the Victorians ? or will there be a new fashion of making out Queen Victoria's reign a golden age ? Anyhow, I am a Victorian if any one is. In 1845, when I was born, only eight years of that reign were past, and fifty-five more to come ; I do not think the wisest man then living could have foreseen any of the surprising events which the Queen lived to see. It was about the middle of the reign when I was called to the Bar. I will not trouble you at large with

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my opinions about the strong and weak points of my generation. But certainly we (meaning English people in the lump) thought too much of ourselves, as was natural enough when most of Europe was copying us. Till about 1870 we thought we could give lessons to all the world, especially in political matters. I am not sure that we have not swung too much the other way of late years. The proportion of journalism to other writing, and of clever journalists to other writers, has increased enormously since the middle of the nineteenth century, and it is easier to make good copy of carping than of praising. Likewise we were too cocksure about lots of things. Many pages were written by great logicians wondering how we knew that Euclid's axioms were absolutely true. Some great mathematicians, my dear friend Clifford among them, had the courage to say we knew no such thing, and now we know they are not true for the space we live in, though near enough for common terrestrial purposes. But there was nothing specially British in that kind of dogmatism. The whole civilized world was too cocksure altogether, as you will have to learn in due time.

On one point the Victorians have been censured overmuch, namely, for their prudery. They did not invent it but were saddled with it as a legacy. If you want to see Mrs. Grundy's terrors at their highest, you must look not at Thackeray's or Trollope's novels but at Jane Austen's, written before Queen Victoria was born. Many elements combined to make the peculiar prudishness of

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respectable English folk in the early nineteenth century (with queer survivals and exaggerations in America much later); one of these was the recrudescence of Puritanism in a diluted form. But the whole matter is by no means simple, and it is too much for a dedication. Quite possibly somebody may have made a full study of it in the meantime. Without waiting for that you may be assured that nineteenth-century prudishness was only one aspect of a general intellectual fustiness. People who have just seen the end of a great European war followed by an agitated epoch of industrial revolution and domestic reforms do not want to tackle any more fundamental questions for a good while. So they make believe that they have got to the bottom of things—or as near as it is safe to go. Mrs. Grundy was only a kind of martinet adjutant to the battalion whose majors were those worthy veterans Paley and De Lolme. As it was, so it may be again. If analogies hold after a century, Mrs. Grundy's great-granddaughters should come out in your time, short-skirted no doubt and with quite another set of taboos. But one never knows.

One of the labels now affixed to the Victorian Age is that it was an age of cant: this is itself only a new piece of cant. The truth is that cant, which is in great part scraps and leavings of wisdom perverted in the mouths of fools, has abounded, abounds, and will abound in all times. Maxims that embodied the live sense of the fathers are worshipped as dead formulas by their sons. But we know the cant of past generations when

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we see it, and do not perceive it in our own time. Rebels against outworn dogmas formulate counter-dogmas and thereby produce a new cant of their own. The Pre-Raphaelites afford a conspicuous example: they had an esoteric list of immortal names which found no room for Dante, Shakespeare, or any of the great European poets, and among painters ignored Leonardo, Titian and Velazquez.<sup>1</sup> Much the same may be said of more recent innovators in art and letters who will not allow that, even if their new things are better, the old things were once new and had some good in them. It is true that the eighteenth century was a formulating age, and the men of the nineteenth century bore a perilous burden of ossified formulas.

After all, your English ancestors who lived and worked towards the middle of the nineteenth century had no small cause to think well of themselves. Their nation had stood out continuously, at times all but alone, against Napoleon's ambition to be the master of Europe; it had recovered from the exhaustion of that effort to make so great and swift an advance in commercial and industrial prosperity as had never yet been seen; British invention and enterprise were the admiration of the world, and Scottish thinkers had laid the foundations of modern economic science. In politics English institutions, already extolled by Voltaire and Montesquieu in the preceding century, were widely accepted as a model, and imitated with considerable success. Only our traditional spirit of moderation and compromise,

<sup>1</sup> E. F. Benson, *As We Were*, 1930, p. 255.



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in which those institutions were rooted, saved English self-satisfaction from exceeding all bounds.

Now that we have been taught by a series of sharp lessons, it is easy for us to smile ironically or laugh contemptuously at the belief entertained in former generations that final stability had been attained, or could ever be attained, in political or social conditions. Yet we should remember that the illusion of 'Rest and be thankful' was not an invention of the nineteenth century and was not peculiar to England. In fact the contentment of eighteenth-century thinkers had been more crude and more assured, and questioning was rife before the middle of the nineteenth. You shall hardly find in any respectable Victorian author such a deliberate and elegantly balanced complacency as Blackstone's; and Blackstone (I trust you will know as well as I do) was no fool in his time. Belated echoes of old-fashioned optimism occur, no doubt, much later in inferior writers. There are some odd ones in the bad verses of Lewis Morris, who continued to pass for a poet in the later years of Queen Victoria's reign and is now all but forgotten.

If the epithet 'Victorian' is to have its natural sense, it applies to the two last generations of the nineteenth century in Great Britain. Now the British people of those generations, so far from maintaining the eighteenth-century traditions of opinion, conduct and taste which were still dominant in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, were engaged in breaking them up. Certainly the leaders in this work were not at one in aim or

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method. Some were in search of new ideals, others attempting to revive old ones of divers kinds. But all of them Anglo-Catholic, Pre-Raphaelite, Darwinian and what not, were thoroughly dissatisfied with the compact and insular conventions of their immediate ancestors. The young adventurers of the twentieth century who profess to owe nothing to them are really standing on their shoulders. No greater mistake can be made than to dismiss the Victorian Age as a period of stagnation. On the surface, no doubt, many outward signs persisted long after the things they had signified were obsolete. This is a perfectly common fact at all times and in all parts of the world. But the emancipation of English thought from the arid rationalism of the Deistic Age, as an anonymous reviewer aptly called it the other day, was a great and an arduous work, and it was done by the despised Victorians.

Finally, I commend to you an appreciation written by a daughter of my friend and colleague, F. W. Maitland, born in the latter days of the Victorian period and certainly not brought up in its conventions: it opens the last chapter of her enthusiastic but not uncritical study of Christina Rossetti.<sup>1</sup>

The age of Queen Victoria was one of energy, quick action, the bursting forth of pent-up powers, vivacious enterprise, glorious as the age of Queen Elizabeth in dreams, splendid with courage, noble with humanitarian, religious, scientific, moral, artistic and poetic zeal.

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<sup>1</sup> *Christina Rossetti*, a study by Fredegond Shove (Cambridge University Press, 1931), p. 105.

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Yes, it was a time of daring adventure and fruitful discovery. The weeds that beset the path and entangled the footsteps of explorers were none of its own growth, but the decaying relics of a past already dead.

What I now proceed to tell you is not a story of my life ; I have not been directly concerned in great events, nor had any surprising adventures. Most autobiographies that are not adventurous are dull, and I have no mind to add that risk to others. Rather I shall try to sum up so much as appears worthy of remembrance in my relations, being of pretty varied sorts, with the world I have lived in : fragments, at best, of a little piece of human society within my limits of time and space. Modern historians, however, have learnt that it is worth while to gather up the fragments, and I hope that my contribution will not be found to contain an undue proportion of rubbish.

Concerning sayings and doings attributed to eminent persons, there is a point of caution I would have you note which I have not seen in print, though it can be no news to judicious historians. An anecdote current in the party's lifetime or not much later, and not contrary to known facts or otherwise manifestly incredible, is at least worth something as evidence of reputation, for it shows what a man's companions thought him likely to say or do. But stories which first appear in a later generation and without good warrant must be received with great caution, and only so far as they are consistent

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with better evidence. Even if there is no apparent motive for invention the risk of attribution to a wrong person is shown by constant experience to be considerable. Ancient and medieval history are full of wandering anecdotes fathered now on one celebrity and now on another, whose place and time of origin are undiscoverable ; and after critical tests are exhausted, there is a large residue of which we can only say that there may possibly be some truth in them. You hardly need to be warned against the opposite extreme of some historians who have disregarded common report only to pin an exclusive and blind faith on official documents and declarations, forgetting that persons in authority are not infallible, and have sometimes been capable of wilful falsehood. G. S. Venables, a very wise man, once said to me, ' Historians have never made sufficient allowance for the deliberate lying of witnesses incapable of deception.'

Lack of apparent motive for falsehood is a useful test but not conclusive, for there are people who invent for the pleasure of inventing. My uncle, Sir Richard Pollock, after long experience of Indian testimony in the Punjab, was one of a special mission to survey the boundaries of Persia and Afghanistan. When he came back, he said he had known plenty of false witnesses who lied for some cause, but he had now learnt that Persians enjoyed lying as a pure fine art. Gibbon had heard of this long before : he says somewhere (I quote from memory, but I think not inaccurately) : We read that the ancient Persians were

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taught to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak the truth : it is believed that their modern descendants continue to practise the two former of those accomplishments.

You will find little or nothing about several well-known persons of my time. These omissions are of two kinds. First, there were not a few with whom I never made acquaintance though I might well have done so, and in some cases just missed it to my regret. Of these there is nothing more to say. Next, there are friends whom I have already commemorated in published writings as best I could. A list of these publications is given in a note below. Then there were others whom I knew quite well, but of whom adequate memoirs have been published by relatives or friends better qualified than myself. In such cases it would be mere impertinence to add a few trifling details, as who should say, ' I was there too.' Sir William Anson and Albert Dicey are the first examples that occur to me.

The book being arranged by subjects and not in order of time, a note of dates in my life is added for the reader's convenience.

NOTE A

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES ALREADY  
PUBLISHED

- BRYCE, JAMES. *Quarterly Review*, no. 471, April 1922.  
CLIFFORD, W. K. Introduction to *Lectures and Essays*,  
London, 1879 (several times reprinted).  
ILBERT, COURTENAY PEREGRINE. Obituary notice in vol. xi.  
of the *Proceedings of the British Academy*.  
MAITLAND, FREDERIC WILLIAM. *Quarterly Review*, no. 411,  
April 1907 ; and obituary notice in vol. ii of the *Pro-  
ceedings of the British Academy*.  
STEPHEN, SIR JAMES FITZJAMES. Review of Leslie Stephen's  
Life, *National Review*, August 1895.  
STEPHEN, LESLIE. *Independent Review*, June 1904, and  
(review of F. W. Maitland's *Life and Letters of L. S.*)  
Dec. 1906.

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NOTE B

PERSONAL DATES

- 1845. Birth, Dec. 10.
- 1858-1863. Eton.
- 1863. Cambridge.
- 1867. B.A. degree.
- 1868. Fellow of Trinity.
- 1871. Call to the Bar.
- 1873. Marriage.
- 1883-1903. Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence, Oxford.
- 1884-1890. Professor of Common Law in the Inns of Court.
- 1895. Editor of the Law Reports.
- 1906. Bencher of Lincoln's Inn.
- 1921. King's Counsel.
- 1931. Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn.

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CHAPTER I  
EVERYDAY LIFE

**B**Y the time you reach years of discretion the dwellings, furniture and general domestic habits of the nineteenth century, in short everything your learned German sums up in the one word *Realien*, may be neatly described and illustrated for you in convenient handbooks. But the authors of those books will not have lived with what they describe, and I have, so that some first-hand notes may still not be amiss. Observe that, as a rule, I speak from my own knowledge only of London and the Universities. Some things may be said of London that are true only in part of other towns, and certainly not true, for example, of Bath. The buildings of the early twentieth century, or the more solid of them, will be familiar to you ; but you will hardly know the fashion of a century before that. All through Queen Victoria's reign dwellers in English towns were as likely as not to inhabit houses dating from the reign of George III. In such a house your father was brought up ; the Duke of Cumberland's head adorned the sign of a public-house extant well into my time not many doors off, whereby you may guess the date of the street. Light and air were about the last things those builders

thought of ; there were queer superstitions about opening windows, and, moreover, there was a window-tax during the Napoleonic wars. Times being hard, they could not afford to think much of outward appearance or to use expensive material. The ugliness of London streets is, I believe, due much more to the muddy drab tint of common London brick than to faulty design. Stucco was welcomed for a time ; there is even a stucco quarter round about Regent's Park, which Sir Henry Taylor admired vastly when he was young. But stucco soon gets dingy in London air. However, builders' work was in itself not bad ; jerry-building set in later and was at its worst (like most arts and crafts) about the middle of the century. But these builders did not dream of such things as bathrooms, lifts, or hot-water circulation. Everything, including hot water, if not cold, had to be carried up and down by hand. Hence a back staircase was thought a mark of elegance ; in auctioneers' jargon it earned the name of *mansion* for any house which it adorned, and it persisted in the belated designs of speculative builders long after any real use for it had ceased. However, the old houses were solid enough to carry modern improvements, and in the time of my middle age they received additions of bathrooms, hot-water supply, and finally electric wiring. Drains, of course, were largely reconstructed, but that is a matter of public works, a large topic on which you must seek information in encyclopædic and other publications of the kind which Charles Lamb would not allow to be books.

One thing touching public health may be just mentioned in passing. The nuisance of house-flies in towns is all but extinct : you would hardly believe to what a point we tolerated them sixty or seventy years ago, or how crude our remedies were, fly-papers and the like. I do not think there is much about this in print ; we took it as an unavoidable incident of warm weather. Heating was rudimentary ; we burnt soft coal in open grates, for the most part very ill constructed ; Rumford had shown at the beginning of the century how a fireplace should be built (some of his work is in use at the Royal Institution at the time of this writing), but after a while nobody minded him.<sup>1</sup> Hot-water pipes were in more or less use in public buildings as far back as I can remember, but in college halls the large open fireplace, originally made for wood fires, held its own. In the hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, there was, down to the repairing and restoring operations of 1866, a central brazier under a lantern which carried off the smoke.

In domestic lighting I have witnessed a series of revolutions. Candles of divers kinds were the most usual indoor light in my boyhood. The old tallow candles, *tollies* as we called them, were still served out at Eton ; and a certain master who was an excellent scholar but not successful or

<sup>1</sup> Some country houses had adopted his model about 1795. 'The fireplace . . . was contracted to a Rumford' (Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, ch. 5, *ad fin.*, p. 162 in vol. 5 of the Novels, ed. Chapman, 1923, and see the editor's note at p. 269).

popular with his division was nicknamed Tolly for his complexion. What we disliked about the tolly was, I think, the need of constant snuffing<sup>1</sup> more than the greasiness; anyhow, those who could afford it bought improved candles; in the 1860's they were 'composite,' but this makeshift soon gave way to the clean hard paraffin or stearin type in use ever since, and like to be so till electric lighting becomes universal, perhaps even then as a humble auxiliary. Real wax candles were a luxury; I do not remember seeing any larger than a taper in private hands. Candle-light was quite good if you had enough of it, and old-fashioned people did not part from it without regret. Before the reign of electricity set in, each individual table in the dining-room of the Athenæum Club had its own candle, and when the change came old members were inconsolable till every table was furnished with a small electric lamp arranged to look as like a candle as might be. Long before that epoch-making change oil lamps had become the regular sitting-room light producers, for many years burning not mineral but whale or vegetable oil. During my Cambridge residence evening work was done with the aid of the moderator lamp, an ingenious French invention. You shall understand that the vegetable burning oils were too heavy for the wick to suck up, so they must either flow down to it from a reservoir above

<sup>1</sup> One could either trim the wick or snuff it quite out. A blown-out wick smouldered and could be revived by a 'rekindling breath' (*Northanger Abbey*. ch. 7, *ad fin.*, p. 170, ed. Chapman).

(which was easily managed with hanging lamps and wall lamps, but awkward for a portable one standing on a table) or be forced upwards. The latter method was worked in the moderator by a compact miniature pump; this was driven by a spring that had to be wound up every two or three hours, and if an absent-minded student forgot the time he was pulled up by a failure of light, a charred wick and a blackened chimney. Mineral oil lamps were free from that trouble, and their fuel was cheaper, but for a long time they were not safe from explosion: such an explosion made a leading case in our law reports, and their use was largely forbidden in schools and colleges. The 'duplex' wick and other improvements overcame this difficulty somewhere about the time when I was called to the Bar. So the paraffin lamp reigned for about a score of years in London; the moderator survived much longer in Paris. Gas was never much liked in London for use in sitting-rooms, partly because it was too hot and partly for want of a satisfactory burner. In the north gas lighting was overdone; once when I was a judge's marshal at Manchester (my uncle, Baron Martin's, I think) the judges rebelled against the glare and heat in their lodgings and called for candles. The Welsbach incandescent burner came to give gas a renewed innings, and has succeeded to a considerable extent, especially for street lighting (of which I do not intend to speak); but it is handicapped by the want of anything so convenient as the electric switch close by the door. Every new form of lighting that was introduced



was said to be bad for the eyes. Probably this was once said of all lamps whatever, certainly it was of mineral oil lamps, and has been of electric light. I do not believe there was anything in it. As to electric lamps, it is now quite well settled that their effect is according to the discretion with which you use them. It is a matter of appropriate glass and shades and reflectors. For the general illumination of a room an equable light diffused by reflection from ceiling or walls is in every way the best, and for this purpose electricity has no rival. Gas finds its compensation in much increased employment for heating and cooking. There is no assignable limit to the possible future uses of electrical energy ; doubtless you will see many of which I cannot even dream. What if it were to provide miners at a reasonable cost (I suppose that, apart from cost, the thing would need no great invention) with a perfectly safe hand lamp and a practically fool-proof explosive power ?

In order to understand the evening aspect of a Victorian family circle it must be noted that commonly there was a solid round table in the middle of the room, and on the middle of the table a pair of candles, whose light the party enjoyed in common while they read, knitted, or talked as the case might be. When the table had to be cleared for a round game the candles would be shifted and put near the edge. A modern young man or woman transported into such a drawing-room might exclaim with Malvolio, ' I say to you, this house is dark ' : but we did not feel it so.

Long before the round table disappeared from the Victorian drawing-room the dining-table underwent a revolution. About 1860 the presiding host laid down the carving knife, and his office, of which carving a goose was the severest test, was transferred to a side table and ultimately to the kitchen. 'Russian dinners' was the catch-word of the change<sup>1</sup>: not being a specialist in gastronomic history, I cannot explain or verify the supposed Russian origin. The new custom gradually spread from company dinners to general domestic habits. No doubt the old way lingered for many years in the country. My last sight of it was when, in the 1890's, I presided at a meeting of the Devonshire Association at South Molton and was called on to carve at luncheon for some thirty members. In my undergraduate days we still 'fleshed our maiden steel in carving' in the hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, as my father said of his generation. Reform came not long after Thompson's accession to the Mastership, in this as in greater matters.

Another revolution spread over the most part of the century was the advancement of the dining hour. It had been noon in the Middle Ages; we read in a Year Book that the King's judges firmly refused to start a new argument after eleven o'clock, saying that the Court was already sitting quite late enough. In Dr. Johnson's time the regular hour was three. Jane Austen seldom gives

<sup>1</sup> My father wrote an article under that title, which the reader was assumed to understand, in *Fraser's Magazine* for April, 1859.

exact particulars of hours or days, but I think her county families dined at five. Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, following the suit of London tardily, were dining at four in my father's time, and five or thereabouts in my undergraduate generation; at Trinity, numbers compelling a division, the high table dined at half-past four and freshmen at half-past five, whereas it has been the other way since I took my degree. Charles Kingsley was persuaded (the passage is somewhere in *Water Babies*) that five o'clock was the proper dinner hour for getting the most work out of a day. Cambridge made a jump of two hours towards 1870 (Trinity in 1867), but many Oxford Colleges and the Inns of Court (the latter giving in last) halted at six o'clock much later; for some time we dined at six on Sundays only at Corpus, under a notion (quite wrong, as it turned out) that thereby the college servants were better able to go to evening church. The hours of plays and public meetings were shifted rather slowly, so that an early collegiate dinner might be a convenience (in my youth evening dress was unusual at the play, though necessary for the opera). Seven o'clock was the normal time in private houses as far back as I remember, but I do not know whether it prevailed so soon in the country; probably there were still old-fashioned people dining at six in London. About 1870 dinner-parties jumped on another half-hour, but half-past seven was still thought rather late for ordinary days. Some ten years later there was another jump to eight o'clock, or seven-forty-five for eight; there were symp-

## DINING HOURS

toms of yet a further advance, but the experiment was found inconvenient and did not persist, Queen Victoria's example notwithstanding: why she chose to dine very late I have never heard. These particulars may seem dull, but you will want them for understanding nineteenth-century literature, just as one may make odd blunders in reading medieval books for want of knowing a little of medieval customs. The eleven-o'clock impatience of the King's judges which I have already mentioned misled an American commentator into the wild imagination of a sitting prolonged till near midnight; he forgot, among other things, that there were no means of lighting Westminster Hall. The reason of this unbroken secular change is not far to seek. Man goes to dinner (when he is civilized enough to be fairly sure of a dinner) when the day's work or the bulk of it is done. Our medieval ancestors rose betimes to secure the benefit of daylight, having little artificial light at home and, as aforesaid, none in public buildings. Later hours were made possible by improved lighting and necessary by the increase of the world's business. During the transition period of dinner at four, five or six o'clock, that increase was dealt with by going back to work in the evening: such indeed was Cambridge practice even in my time. When my father was young at the Bar, evening consultations were quite usual. Many men, of course—apart from journalists, whose hours are peculiar—are still driven to night-work unless they prefer, as my grandfather did, to get up very early. But this is outside the extension of regular

business hours which was the determining factor. The habits of the House of Commons are altogether anomalous and may be left out of the general account.

On the Continent of Europe the corresponding movement was on the whole slower than in England, and the pace varied in different countries. In Paris as late as 1880, in Berlin a dozen years later, evening dress (as we call it here) was not usual at small dinners of friends: the Continental tradition was that the black coat was appropriate not to the hour but to the occasion; it was civilian full dress by day as well as by night. Bridegrooms, in France at any rate, and candidates at university examinations wore it. Once, at Leyden, I saw a poor young man in tail coat and white tie, who had come all the way from the Dutch East Indies, make a pitiful show of ignorance before a whole group of professors, including no less a man than Cobet, the consummate master of Greek whom Shilleto of Cambridge recognized as his equal. In Latin Shilleto allowed one scholar to be his superior: 'I bow to Madvig,' I have heard him say: which, coming from Shilleto, was not arrogance but a royal compliment. Then at Perugia, many years later, I found myself by a happy accident undertaking to represent Oxford (which the Law Faculty ratified at the first opportunity) at the celebration of that very learned civilian Baldo's fifth centenary; there was a day meeting with long official speeches and an evening dinner with informal ones, all quite short and to the point. For the meeting I put on the least

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rustic morning clothes I had, and for dinner the evening dress I carried for unexpected occasions. This was my English instinct, and wrong, for the afternoon ceremony was the real solemnity. Nowadays cosmopolitan manners are tending to level down peculiar customs and observances everywhere; I am apt to think their last refuge may be in collegiate and quasi-collegiate bodies. We have some curious ones, though they cannot be very ancient, at the Inns of Court. Regimental distinctions and customs, which are justly cherished for the sake of their honourable origins, are likely to all seeming to live as long as the regiments themselves.

To return to dining, the hours of the Colonial period lasted well into my time in New England. Oliver Wendell Holmes (not my learned friend in the law and lifelong friend in fact whose praise is in the Supreme Courts of Massachusetts and the United States, but his father of literary fame and identical name) introduced me to the Saturday Club of Boston in 1884, and an excellent company it was. Its weekly dinner was held at half-past two, then, as in the Colonial days, the usual hour of New Englanders in the country though no longer so in the city. Dr. Johnson, if we could have called him up, would surely have charged the Boston 'rebels' with backward rusticity—backward by a full half-hour as judged under the meridian of Fleet Street.

The art of dining has been expounded by many able writers from Brillat-Savarin onwards, Walker of *The Original* being the English pioneer of

reform, and the subject is too large for me to dwell upon. Enough to say that until the last quarter of the nineteenth century British ignorance was profound, save for a few shining lights in the darkness. The proof is in the common routine of public banquets and private dinner-parties: for a minor example I quote from my diary the result of ordering an omelette at a Welsh inn of some pretensions in the spring of 1867: 'a tough circular plate of uniform thickness in which onions were the predominant ingredient.' It would have rolled down Snowdon intact. Typical Victorian bills of fare were wrong in conception, monotonous in detail, and, for the most part, slovenly in execution. My parents, in a quiet way, were among the advanced guard of those who knew better. Not that the fault was with genuine English cookery, which had and has great merit within its proper bounds and under the right English conditions: it lay in the bungling imitation of misunderstood French models. Of drink, again, you may read at large in authors of good repute, and I say nothing. Only, if you would know the horrors that French wine suffered at one time in the cellars of English wine merchants, look out *Claret* in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. As late as 1892 a special commission sent to Trinidad found that the 'claret' imported from England was doctored—presumably to suit the supposed taste of the British colony—and took counsel with a highly respected member of the French colony (which maintained its language and individual character, and no doubt still does

so).<sup>1</sup> He earned the Commissioners' gratitude by telling them where pure wine of Bordeaux was to be had.

Contemporary prints, which you can see in many reproductions if not in the originals, will be your best introduction to the outdoor aspects of London in the nineteenth century. But they will not show you much of the busy thoroughfares eastward of Park Lane and St. Martin-in-the-Fields, nor disclose the fact that, long before motor vehicles were invented, congestions of traffic were not only possible but frequent in some quarters. In the afternoon hours a more or less continuous block anywhere between Chancery Lane and Oxford Circus was quite regular in my experience when there was as yet no tube to relieve the rush of home-going passengers. Moreover, police regulation of traffic was in its infancy. Nowadays there is much talk of noise ; people are worried by novel attacks on their ears but forget the old ones. Quiet has never been an attribute of capital cities. Rome was smoky and clamorous as well as wealthy in Horace's time ; it is not easy to see where so much smoke came from, but so Horace tells us. There is no reason to think that Nineveh and Babylon in their day had fared better. As to the quality of London noises, horse-hoofs and iron-tyred wheels on paved road (for many streets were still paved within my memory) or even

<sup>1</sup> French immigration in the early years of the Revolution practically swamped the culture of the original Spanish occupiers. It is a curious history and not the less profitable for being on a small scale.



macadam were loud enough, and the cries of hawkers and newsboys and the instruments of street musicians were no less discordant and strident than our motor-horns : not to mention the whistling for cabs, which at certain hours amounted to a nuisance in the region of clubs. The suppression of this last plague is one of the few benefits received from the War that may be set off against the generally increased expense and cumbrousness of life. Do not suspect me of thinking that the freedom of Europe was not on the whole worth a great price, even the price of all the lives given for it ; I speak here of the lesser matters. So the truth about noise in London is not that where it is greatest it is really worse than before, but that it is more widely spread ; the streets are more thronged and for more hours of the day, but the real difference is that fewer thoroughfares are quiet. In like manner it is well known to mountaineers that the labour of a day's climbing is to be measured not by the occurrence of specially difficult passages but by the lack of easy ones. Oases, however, are not wanting in our wilderness of brick and stone. First the parks, in which one may walk from Kensington Palace to the Horse Guards with only one crossing of a street at Hyde Park Corner ; then the squares and public or semi-public gardens conspicuous to everyone who has seen London at all ; and besides these a number of retired little grass plots, even little ponds and fountains, not so familiar but not without lovers. One such is in the old Staple Inn, no farther from Chancery Lane on the east than the gardens of

Lincoln's Inn on the west. New Square, Lincoln's Inn, by the way, has become the home of a pair of wild ducks. Lincoln's Inn Fields belong to the larger and more notorious class of open spaces, and the younger generations know nothing of the time well within my remembrance when there was only a rather ill-tended enclosure reserved for a handful of subscribers. Here the London County Council has done admirable work ; and almost all the London trees and flowers are better kept than they were, and with better taste.

As to general facilities for moving about London, meaning thereby London proper, the Golden Age covered the reign of King Edward VII and outlasted it by a year or two. Completion of the underground railway system, delivered by electric working from vapours of steam and imperfectly consumed smoke, had relieved the roads and greatly shortened the time for journeys longer than a mile or two. Motor vehicles, not yet a crowd of themselves, came opportunely to abate the nuisance of irritating and evil-smelling stable dust with which the overgrowth of horse traffic was filling the air in the summer months. The hansom cab was at its best, like stage-coaches just before railways came in : and certainly a well-appointed hansom was a mighty pleasant conveyance on a fine day. Ten miles an hour, or maybe twelve, with the air on one's face and a clear outlook, made a singular combination of enjoyments ; a four-wheeled open carriage was not near it. Certainly one could not bow from a hansom, and a visible lifting of the hat was not easy. However,

my only real problem in that position was on a day when I wore not a hat but wig and gown, coming away from the Chancellor's reception of the Bar before the autumn opening of the Courts. As my hansom approached Buckingham Palace a carriage driving in crossed our front a few yards ahead. It contained persons of great importance, persons who must somehow be saluted : but how ? A wig is not a hat to be taken off, a bow was impossible. Being a veteran of the Inns of Court Corps I fell back on a military salute as the only possible gesture ; it was not strictly correct with a wig, but it was graciously returned. One occasional danger of the hansom is, I suppose, quite forgotten now. A jibbing horse might kick the splash-board to pieces ; I have known it twice ; one of those times I was convoying a Unionist delegate from Ulster who had never been in London, so he got a new experience that was not in the bill. The foil that set off the hansom was the four-wheeled ' growler,' a byword for slowness and shabbiness. A smart four-wheeler was for some obscure reason extremely rare. Our modern taxi has shaken off any following of the growler's habits that may have clung to it in youth, and it must be confessed that a good taxi is as good as the hansom ever was, with the advantage of greater speed. Unhappily it may not use that advantage inside London. Constant slowing down and stopping reduce the average to something even below the old four-wheeler's, not counting the departures from the shortest line imposed by traffic regulations. Indeed, a fast walker might back himself

against the taxi for distances up to two miles, say from the Marble Arch to Chancery Lane—except that the pavements are crowded too. (But, as I revise this for the press, there is a beginning of effectual reform.)

The vanished and vanishing conventions of English nineteenth-century society would furnish matter for a volume; I can only point out one or two. Any observant reader of the classical novelists will perceive that, down to the middle of the century or later, rank and title carried far more dead weight, so to speak, than they do now. Not even the most foolish baronet could at this day be so puffed up with the mere fact of baronetcy as Jane Austen's Sir Walter Elliot in *Persuasion*. What is rather curious is that this kind of superstition was compatible with a good deal of slovenliness in matters of form and even of substance. At one time unpunctuality was rather in fashion. King Edward VII had a leading part in putting a stop to the Victorian slackness. He was not averse to Liberty Hall manners on informal occasions, but he perceived, quite rightly in the main, that ceremonial usage of every kind must be exact on pain of becoming ridiculous. Details would not be convincing unless presented at such length as would be tedious, so you must take a grandfather's word for it that the change is evident to old Victorians. Domestic service had an odd etiquette of its own. Every male householder who was a gentleman by birth or profession was expected to keep a manservant, not for show but for the supposed necessity of guarding 'the plate.'

A gentleman must have real silver, if it were only a dozen or two of spoons and forks ; and it was a man's job to keep it safe against thieves by sleeping in or near the pantry. Another relic of ancient insecurity (rather that, I think, than a general distrust of under-servants' honesty) was the locking up of household stores. Tea in particular, having once been a costly luxury, was treated with special respect. Day by day the mistress of the house, or the confidential house-keeper in a large establishment, served it out from store into the expense magazine, a more or less ornamental box called a tea-caddy, which itself was locked except when tea was being made. Sugar and coffee were not so jealously guarded, so far as I remember.

One irrational but in its day universal superstition, to me an unfortunate one, was that nobody under the age of leaving school could have any business with spectacles. In the Victorian era parents dosed their children on every slight provocation with drugs which probably did more harm than good, and left eyes and teeth to take care of themselves : the dentist was regarded as a mere occasional tooth-drawer, the oculist as little more than a master spectacle-maker. So, until I put on my first glasses after leaving Eton, I never understood why I could make nothing of cricket (just because I could not see the ball in time), nor why faces, even of people I was seeing every day, were confused in my sight at the other end of the room. Shyness and awkwardness are the inevitable consequence of seeing less than

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other folks and not knowing how much less. Now we understand that the testing of defective sight should not be delayed, and that a misfit in lenses is far more serious than a misfit in clothes. Whether the people we call in the lump ancients had on the whole much better sight than ours is, I conceive, an insoluble question. What is certain is that we owe the invention of spectacles (as well as clocks, windmills, and printing) to those Middle Ages which in the eighteenth and even the nineteenth century were called barbarous.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HUMANITIES: MASTERS AND FRIENDS

MY chief academic allegiance, like my father's and my grandfather's before me, is to Trinity College, Cambridge, though it is less exclusive than theirs. I came straight from Eton to Trinity, never lost touch of Etonian memories and friendships, and in a manner revived my school age in your father's person. Meanwhile I had acquired an attachment for the University of Oxford (and in particular to Corpus, of which I was an official Fellow), which held a considerable place in my life for twenty years and, after many years more, is by no means extinct. I said a word about Victorian slackness in the first chapter ; my election to the Chair of Jurisprudence affords a pretty strong example. My predecessor, Maine, being an elector, sent me a private telegram, but I had never a word from the Vice-Chancellor or any other University officer. The only regular evidence of my appointment that ever came to my immediate knowledge was the fact of being admitted to a fellowship in my new College by the President of Corpus. But in these days it was said that epistles addressed to the University of Oxford by foreign universities and

academies were as likely as not to be mislaid or wholly neglected. This is an irresistible digression.

Now concerning Eton I have next to nothing to tell you in a general way. There are plenty of books about the history of Eton College and the modern life of the school ; most of them are good, and the years covering my own school time are specially well accounted for. I hope you may read some of these books in my copies. My particular good fortune was to be one of William Johnson (afterwards Cory)'s pupils. He is by this time well known in the world of letters, but only those who learnt from him knew his power of teaching them to learn with understanding. My Greek and Latin, and my permanent interest in those tongues, are mostly of his planting. Moreover, he taught us in the informal classes outside school hours, called 'private,' many things that were not in the regular lessons. On Sundays, when we should or might have been mumbling the dry bones of Sunday Questions, he introduced us to literature that was technically profane. He put *The Shaving of Shagpat* in my hands—an immortal joy to those who love it—long before I knew anything else of George Meredith or his works. Meredith says in a published letter that only two of his friends appreciated *Shagpat* ; I must believe there were more, my friend George Trevelyan (the younger) for one. At my age I did not trouble myself about the symbolic interpretations of the *Shagpat* fable which every reader may make at his own pleasure. One such was published with Meredith's general approval, conveyed



in the letter I have just mentioned.<sup>1</sup> History, again, came into the school work only so far as necessary for understanding the classical texts, and then for the most part in a bare and dry fashion; William Johnson taught us its living interest and its importance in forming a wide and rational outlook on public affairs. Not that he was of the severely cosmopolitan school who would have historians wholly forget the citizen in the scientific student. Our tutor certainly wanted us to be patriots—indeed the excess was on that side, if on either—but patriots by conviction, prepared to give reasons for our faith. It was by this bent of his genius rather than by his technical scholarship that he left his mark on the next generation in the persons of pupils eminent in diverse kinds of action: Take as examples pretty wide apart Lord Rosebery, so brilliant in a too short public career that we think of him, though he accomplished much, as not having done enough, and Sir Neville Lyttelton, who, till so short a time ago, was still with us to represent a great Etonian family tradition. Another, the late Lord Esher, has spoken excellently of Johnson in *Ionicus*. As to pure scholarship it is certain that William Johnson stood very high, even without allowance for a schoolmaster's scanty portion of learned leisure. He would, I think, have been content to give place to Munro in Latin, and I suppose he was second, though a good second, to Jebb in

<sup>1</sup> Meredith's allegory: *The Shaving of Shagpat*, interpreted by James McKechnie. London, 1910 (letter dated May 21, 1906).

Greek ; but, taking knowledge and command of the two languages together, I have not known his superior. Munro said that no other modern Latin verse came so near to the originals as Johnson's ; those who know Munro's own performance in that kind will appreciate the weight of his praise. I have myself known Johnson detect slips which had passed muster with good scholars. Once he alarmed me by doubting whether a word was correctly used in an inscription I submitted to him, written for the memorial tablet to Sir Henry Maine in Westminster Abbey. To my relief I found that I could produce good authority for it.

What I have said in praise of my tutor's ' private ' work in the pupil-room must be taken as applying in various degrees to the like work of other tutors. His tuition was a glorified species, but of the same genus. One may almost say that Eton anticipated the modern ' seminar ' in a form adapted to boys, but, according to English and Etonian tradition, without talking about it. In praising ' private ' instruction as a peculiar merit of Eton I do not mean to imply that there was but little profit to be had from the lessons in school. A good scholar could and did make his mark as a division master, and our old-fashioned way of reading the classical authors had its merits. We, masters and boys together, hardly paused on critical points ; we fudged many hard places, and the learners were left to find out in riper years, if they kept up their Latin, how far from easy Horace's language really is. But we did read our

books in masses and not in snippets, and did get imbued with a sense of their literary greatness. It is better, if one must choose, to know the best of Horace's odes almost by heart, without having perceived such niceties as his aorist use of the perfect tense or his careful placing of emphatic adjectives, than to pore over difficult passages with a microscopic eye. Those who have a turn for it learn the use of the microscope later.

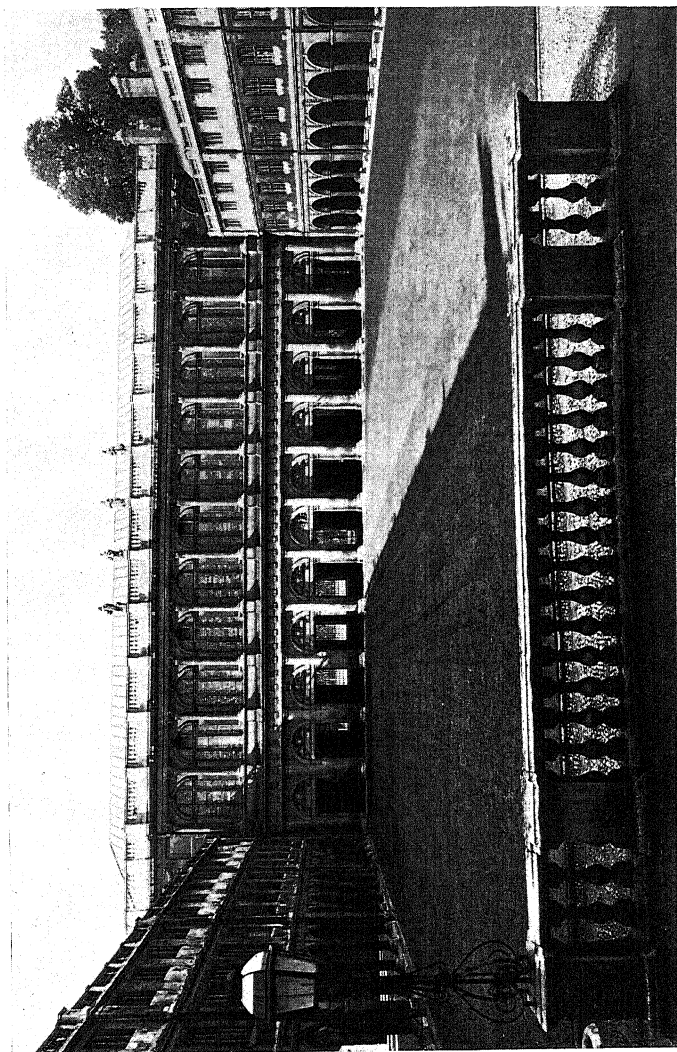
On the other hand we did not neglect the secondary writers in the much larger and more varied Greek literature. We tasted Theocritus, Callimachus, and others (including some of the best anonymous fragments) in a special book of selections very well chosen by Cookesley of Eton, a notable scholar in his time ; it was called *Poetæ Græci*. What has taken its place in the reformed curriculum I know not, but I have been thankful for it ever since. By an undesigned automatic process, not much unlike our dealings with Homer and Horace, we were soaked with the Prayer-book version of the Psalms in chapel (it was then the parish church of Eton, and we called it church, not chapel, accordingly) : a much better thing both for our morals and for our English than any set learning by heart. We never troubled ourselves about the verses which (by no fault of either Vulgate or English translators, I believe, but by reason of ancient corruption) make no acceptable sense. Sehon, King of the Amorites, and Og, the King of Bashan, mattered little to us, but their discomfiture, with the refrain of ' his mercy endureth for ever ' which we all shouted, went with a good

rousing chant. As for the repetition of platitudes that abounds in the later and more formal Psalms, singing covers a multitude of such things, and they did not then bore young people.

My passage from Eton to Cambridge did not take the line of least resistance. By that line I should have gone not to Trinity, though it was my father's and my grandfather's college, but to King's. Our pious founder of Eton College, King Henry VI, also founded a sister college at Cambridge: Winchester was his avowed model, so much so that Eton was started with a colony from Winchester. William of Wykeham had founded New College, Oxford, for his Winchester scholars, and after his example King's College was established at Cambridge for the King's Scholars of Eton. For some centuries it admitted no other members, and all Eton masters were taken from its younger Fellows. It was a small privileged college standing apart, privileged by exemption from the ordinary university qualifications for a degree. After the Reformation the results departed widely from the founder's intentions, but on the whole it did credit to his saintly tradition that they were not worse. You may find the details, if you will, in Maxwell Lyte's excellent history and other Eton chronicles. Naturally the pick of Eton scholars were elected to King's; and it was hardly to be thought of that any of them should renounce the prospect of an immediate scholarship to be followed by an almost certain Fellowship. Indeed, such a course would be thought worse than imprudent, a rejection of the

pious founder's bounty savouring of the sin of rebellion if it did not amount to apostasy.

To King's, therefore, I should have gone in the usual course. On the other hand Trinity had been the birthplace of my grandfather's career, and my father was attached to the college by many links of still living friendship. I do not know how the balance would have swayed if my tutor's opinion had been for King's, as an ordinary Eton tutor's would have been, or neutral. But William Johnson, himself a King's man, was clear in favour of the more arduous and less obvious course, and by his advice I went up, a year before I might have been elected to King's, for an open minor scholarship at Trinity ; there were no entrance foundation scholarships at that time. And so it has come about that now our family can show a lineal succession from father to son of four scholars of Trinity, three of whom, my grandfather, your father and myself, were also Fellows. The old Provost of King's, I learnt afterwards, was highly displeased. He could do nothing to my tutor, and I suppose he said nothing directly. For myself, I was never invited to King's except in a strictly private manner among personal friends. Jealousies of this kind look petty enough at a distance of many years, but in my youth the universities were full of them. At this day King's, like New College, retains its nucleus of the founder's scholars but is also an eminent open college taking its full part in university life. In those days King's and Trinity were as little alike as two royal foundations could be, though, by reason of Etonians being



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numerous in Trinity, they were on rather specially good terms with one another. Trinity, with St. John's fairly close on its heels, stood out as very much larger than other colleges, and was indeed a microcosm in itself. (These violent contrasts in the size of different colleges were not good for either the Colleges or the University; they have disappeared in the twentieth century.) Public school men coming to Trinity with a certain number of friendships and associations already formed were in a position, so to speak, to make the best of both worlds.

I have seen four Masters of Trinity in my time. The first of them, Whewell, had in my father's undergraduate days been a severe and unpopular tutor<sup>1</sup>: and promotion did not soften him. Next came Thompson, formerly Professor of Greek, whose fastidious taste and keen wit concealed a really genial nature from superficial observers. Then Montagu Butler, an accomplished humanist above all things, an admirable speaker at festive meetings, and witty without malice. The present Master, Sir J. J. Thomson, is known to all men as one of our captains in mathematical physics; it would not be fitting to add more than that the humanities are not alien to him. Whewell was a sturdy man of the North Country, self-made, self-confident, and self-opinionated. In his time it was still possible to aim at covering the whole field of European letters and science. Lord Brougham and Whewell were about the last men who did so,

<sup>1</sup> According to the *D.N.B.* he was popular; I think my father's recollection more probable.



Whewell certainly much better than Brougham. Without attaining the first rank in any one branch of learning, he was respectably competent in several, did useful work in more than one,<sup>1</sup> and was an impostor in none. A wide outlook teaches some men to be modest and tolerant, but it did not so teach Brougham (whose conceit was inborn and invincible) nor yet Whewell. To his colleagues Whewell was overbearing, to his juniors arrogant and inaccessible; I never heard that he spoke to an undergraduate save in official rebuke. At his formal receptions in the Lodge ('perpendiculars' as they were called) he stood up radiating repulsion. In his private relations he may have behaved otherwise for aught I know. Not that his pride was merely selfish; he was genuinely devoted to the College and a vigorous champion of its rights and dignity. Moreover, he is justly honoured as a generous benefactor of both the College and the University. But when all is said, it is certain that despotic monarchy is not the right kind of government for any college, least of all for Trinity. Thompson's advent cleared the air of a constraint which was becoming intolerable. By him Trinity Lodge was restored to its proper function of being the social as well as the official centre of the College and dispensing a noble hospitality. The Queen's Justices of Assize, occupying their own quarters in

<sup>1</sup> I am not sure that his merits as an editor of Grotius have been adequately recognized by professional jurists. He must not be blamed for calling (or letting the printer call) Grotius' masterpiece '*De iure belli et pacis*'; whereas it should be *ac*; for the mistake is only too common even in learned works.

the Lodge by a custom of which no documentary origin is known,<sup>1</sup> found a welcome instead of a grudging reception or no reception at all. As for Thompson's reported sharpness of tongue, 'an unhappy gift of epigrammatic speech,' as Henry Jackson called it,<sup>2</sup> it has been exaggerated in the transmission even of authentic anecdotes. If he could be sarcastic at times, he was not unjust. The sharpest thing I ever heard him say did not concern any one under his jurisdiction or resident in the University, and was probably well deserved. Once when I was dining at the Lodge, and Henry Sidgwick was of the company, Sidgwick spoke of a conversation with Lord Westbury (himself noted for a pretty sharp tongue), in which Westbury held forth on the part the universities ought to take in teaching law. They should give special attention, he said, to the connection between law and morals, 'a subject so important and so much neglected.' Thereupon Thompson, at the head of the table, lifted up his commanding eyebrows, a gesture familiar to all who knew him, and spoke these words: 'He stole two books of mine.' There was no more to be said of Lord Westbury as a champion of morality.

By way of summary I repeat here some words I wrote to Mrs. Butler when memory was fresh:

<sup>1</sup> King Henry VIII, or some other royal benefactor, might well have attached such a condition to his bounty, and this has been a current explanation, but there is no record of any such matter.

<sup>2</sup> *Henry Jackson, O.M.*, by R. St. John Parry, Cambridge, 1926, p. 294.

## THE HUMANITIES

I have known Trinity under three Masters—Whewell, surviving from a generation in which it was still possible to aim at omniscience, a strong man feared and respected but little beloved, certainly very little in the College—Thompson, feared in a different way by those who did not really know him, beloved by those who did—and your husband, so beloved of all that there was no talk of fear, and yet with no lack of dignity and no disparagement of the respect due to the College and to his place as its head.<sup>1</sup>

Thompson and the brothers Henry and Arthur Sidgwick were members of the Cambridge Conversation Society, commonly called the Apostles, and so was Montagu Butler, Thompson's successor in the Mastership. My chief personal good fortune at Cambridge was being elected in my second year a member of that Society; my proposer was Henry Jackson. Concerning the peculiar character of the Society and the comradeship of its members there is a memorable passage in a long-forgotten book by the late Sir Arthur Helps. My father transcribed it in 1887 in his book of *Personal Remembrances*<sup>2</sup> (he had been Queen's Remembrancer for many years), and it will bear transcribing again. It is part of an imaginary conversation, but there is nothing imaginary in the matter.

'The best protest I ever knew made against worldly success was by a small society of young men at college'—not of one college only, though at that time Trinity was the centre. 'Their numbers were very few, and their mode of election was the most remarkable I have ever

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<sup>1</sup> *Henry Montagu Butler: a Memoir*, London, 1925, p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i, p. 6 (not 'Reminiscences,' as I have more than once seen the title misquoted).

known. The vacancies were exceedingly rare—perhaps one or two in the course of the year—and the utmost care and study were bestowed on choosing the new members. Sometimes months were given to the consideration of a man's claim. Rank neither told for a man nor against him. The same with riches, the same with learning, and, what is more strange, the same with intellectual gifts of all kinds. The same, too, with goodness ; nor even were the qualities that make a man agreeable any sure recommendation of him as a candidate. . . . The man was not to talk the talk of any clique ; he was not to believe too much in any of his adventitious advantages, neither was he to disbelieve in them—for instance, to affect to be a radical because he was a lord. I confess I have no one word which will convey all that I mean ; but I may tell you that, above all things, he was to be open-minded. When we voted for a man we generally summed up by saying, " He has an apostolic spirit in him," and by that we really meant a great deal. I remember —, who is now a very great personage in the world, saying to me, " In the course of one's chequered life one meets with many disgraces and contumelies, and also with several honours ; but no honour ever affected me so much as being elected, as a youth, into that select body." . . . The choice made by these young men, though made without any view to future worldly pre-eminence, yet seemed to involve it, for a very large proportion of the men so selected have made their mark in the world ; and some of the foremost men of the time belonged to that Society.'

So said Helps in 1868 ; my father bore witness a score of years later that it was true, and now that more than sixty years have passed I bear witness that it is still as true as ever. Age is no bar to this, for, as my father went on to say, that comradeship is not of one generation only. Without the bond

of the Society I could not have known Sir Henry Maine and Fitzjames Stephen, or my very learned senior friend, Sir Howard Elphinstone, as well as I did ; perhaps I should never have known such juniors as the brilliant writer Lytton Strachey,<sup>1</sup> who showed the apostolic virtue of open-mindedness by setting out to chaff Queen Victoria and finally worshipping her, and the profound mathematician Whitehead, who turned philosopher and as such has been annexed by Harvard University. Moreover, this same bond adds a special zest both to friendships already formed and to others contracted by members for independent causes after they have ceased to be residents. In my own case I enjoyed this experience in the earlier stage with A. J. Butler, whose praise is among Dante scholars and is recorded in an excellent memoir by Sir A. Quiller-Couch, with W. K. Clifford, who, if the fates had suffered it, would have been in line with Einstein as his companion or maybe precursor (for he was already pointing that way when he was cut off), with Arthur Sidgwick, a brilliant scholar and a man of singular charm, whom I found again in due time in the common-room of Corpus at Oxford, and others. Later there was F. W. Maitland : our common devotion to the history of English law would have made us friends in any case, but the apostolic fellowship set a specially delightful seal on our intimacy. He was, as A. J. Butler said, best beloved in the Society by those who knew him best. At its meetings he had full scope for his peculiar gift of illuminating humour.

<sup>1</sup> This was written in his lifetime.

The manner and procedure of those meetings is pretty fully described in the authoritative memoir of Henry Sidgwick written by his wife and his brother Arthur,<sup>1</sup> and Sidgwick himself, in an autobiographical fragment, summed up the spirit of the Society in these words :

I can only describe it as the spirit of the pursuit of truth with absolute devotion and unreserve by a group of intimate friends, who were perfectly frank with each other, and indulged in any amount of humorous sarcasm and playful banter, and yet each respects the other, and when he discourses tries to learn from him and see what he sees. Absolute candour was the only duty that the tradition of the Society enforced.

According to Charles Merivale, Dean of Ely, who was seven years senior to my father, the Society was in danger of becoming a clique in its youth, about 1830, for it ' held established principles '—though they do not appear to have been anything more definite than a cult of Coleridge and Wordsworth<sup>2</sup> ; not such bad idols for young men if idols they must have. Merivale goes on to speak of the ' reckless, joyous evenings . . . how every one hit his neighbour, intellectually, right and left, and was hit again, and no mark left on either side ' ; this does not seem to fit a society of doctrinaires, neither does Merivale's list of the members in his time, including men of such different habits of mind as Archbishop Trench, Tennyson, F. D. Maurice

<sup>1</sup> *Henry Sidgwick : a Memoir*, by A.S. and E.M.S., 1906, pp. 29, 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Autobiography and Letters*, Oxford, 1898 (pr. pr.), pp. 98, 99.

and Lord Houghton. A generation later Henry Sidgwick could not find so much 'exuberant vitality' in the meetings as Merivale remembered; and it is true that the number of members was rather low in the 1860's. If the vitality did for this or some other reason slumber a little it has revived abundantly. Sidgwick mentions elsewhere in his journal that it was among the Apostles he acquired 'a belief that we *can* learn, and a determination that we *will* learn, from people of the most opposite opinions.' Within my own memory the Society has included the widest possible range of opinion and intellectual temper. There have been among us adherents of nearly all Western Churches, including the Roman, and dissentients from all; philosophers of all schools, monist, pluralist, realist, idealist; politicians who sat on opposed benches; orthodox, independent, and paradoxical scholars. Only an apostolic bracket is large enough to hold such groups as Dean Alford, Clifford, V. H. Stanton and Bernard Holland; Spencer Walpole, Sir William Harcourt, Sir George Trevelyan, Horsman,<sup>1</sup> not to mention less prominent Ulstermen and Home Rulers; James Ward, McTaggart, Bernard Russell and Whitehead; or (although the difference in method and outlook may be less obvious) Jebb, Jackson, Leaf and Verrall. In my own profession we are free from acute controversy, but have several distinct

<sup>1</sup> A noted parliamentary orator in his day, and one of the group of dissentient Liberals led by Lowe (Lord Sherbrooke) and nicknamed the Cave of Adullam in the Reform controversy preceding Disraeli's feat of dishing the Whigs in 1867.

branches of work, some in the public eye and others not, and shades of difference within them ; of these very few have not a Cambridge Apostle to show. Maine, Fitzjames Stephen and Maitland renovated (if it is too much to say created) the scientific and historical study of the laws of England, each in his thoroughly individual manner. Stephen, who succeeded Maine on the Governor-General's Council in India, was followed on the bench of English judges by Fletcher Moulton (and the Society is represented there now). Harcourt was a vigorous lawyer-politician, one of the leaders of the Bar whose heart is in the House of Commons and whose career leads to the Cabinet. In contrast to him, the names of Elphinstone and Vaughan Hawkins, unknown to the world at large, were and are in high honour in the comparative seclusion of Lincoln's Inn, where a small body of specialists grapples with the intricate problems of our law of property. Charles Sanger, a worthy follower of Hawkins and editor of his classical work on the *Construction of Wills* (a book you will have to consult, may have to study, if you become a practising lawyer, and will probably never see if you do not), was prematurely lost to us only the other day.

Mathematicians are not so easily classified as scholars, philosophers or publicists. To an outsider's eye two kinds are manifest : those who are born with mathematical imagination and are mathematicians all their lives, and the men of hard and clear heads who master the science not for its own sake but as a stage in the road to other sorts of eminence, and contribute little or nothing to it



afterwards. In our Cambridge Society Clerk Maxwell and Clifford were of the former type, Lord Moulton of the latter. Herein Moulton followed the precedent of other high wranglers, Parke, Romer, Stirling, and your own ancestor. To the end of his life, however, the Chief Baron never lost sight of his mathematics, though he could not follow the developments of modern analysis, not to speak of the dethronement of Euclid which he did not live to see.

In pure literature Walter Raleigh was the pride and the delight of our Society for many years ; to the world a brilliant expounder and a fine critic, to his intimates a surpassing humorist. The work he published himself is excellent, but the man is better revealed in his letters, and for the elect *Laughter from a Cloud* (where you may find an essay read to the Society) is best of all. He was of the rare companions from whom one cannot part without longing to meet them again, and wishing the next meeting could come sooner.

Then, to complete our Society, we had members who became eccentric personages, *faces* as we used to say at Eton. One such expended his mature life, or rather a life that somehow was never mature, in frittering away considerable abilities just as if he were doing it for a wager, and in such fashion as to entertain the University with a kind of innocent satyric drama. For want of a little common sense and a more sympathetic chief, he had just missed earning an honourable place among teachers and humanists, with only a harmless touch of comedy. As it was, he made himself the

hero of a grotesque legend. The fatal quarrel with his head master illustrated a truth which I have at sundry times observed and am unable to explain, namely, that a head master invariably puts himself in the wrong when he writes to *The Times*. Quite enough has been published about O. B., not only by others but by himself in sublime unconsciousness of his own absurdity. You will know whom I mean if the legend survives into your time ; if not, the full name would tell you nothing. I have never met with a similar case of real talent being wasted by its own facility and (it seems) by an invincibly superficial intellect.

To return to the Society as it was in my own experience, Sidgwick and Jackson were its leaders, so far as a pure democracy with no practical aims can have leaders. Both were northern Englishmen, but of very different types. Henry Sidgwick was a born philosopher, ardent in the pursuit of truth, capable of sacrificing worldly advantage to his conscience, yet always judicious and abhorring dogmatism almost to the point of enjoying suspense of judgment for its own sake. He was delightful to listen to, though he lacked the physical means that are a condition of normal eloquence, and indeed was hampered by an invincible stammer. But he did with that stammer what I have never known any other man do ; not being able to abolish it, he turned it to the point of keeping it as it were suspended over his sentence, and bringing it down like a hammer-stroke on the emphatic word so that it served to heighten the effect. In speculation he was sceptical, in action

cautious but not timid ; at least once his caution was justified by the failure of rash counsels which he had been unable to check.

Henry Jackson was a sturdy Yorkshireman, of the breed who can do anything they have a mind to, though commonly they make up their mind pretty soon. Jackson did so ; his decision to be a teacher, and a university teacher, was undoubtedly right. His life-long work for the College and the University is fully recorded in Mr. St. John Parry's memoir, and he had plenty of other interests in life and letters, as the selection from his correspondence in the same book bears witness. In conversation he was almost the opposite of Sidgwick ; his talk was rapid, incisive, never becoming a monologue, always carrying the weight of unexhausted driving energy. When the Order of Merit was conferred on Jackson it was something of a surprise to his friends ; not that they had any doubt about his deserts, but because the sphere of his work was remote from the high places of this world in which public honours are adjudged. But in fact Jackson was a friend of both Asquith and John Morley, and already a trusted adviser on more than one administrative problem in matters of education. He was serving on the Royal Commission on the Irish University and on the Treasury Committee for University grants. In a letter since published he definitely ascribed the recommendation of his name for the Order of Merit to Asquith.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. St. John Parry, *Henry Jackson, O.M.* (1926), pp. 81, 83.

An elder Cambridge man to whom I owed much was Henry Bradshaw of King's, the University Librarian. When the glaring blunders of Sir Travers Twiss's reprint of Bracton set me on examining the Cambridge and Lincoln's Inn MSS. I consulted Bradshaw, our friendship being already of long standing, and he was my first and chief preceptor in the elements of *res diplomatica*, whereby I became in time a tolerable amateur medievalist. My memories of Bradshaw and Henry Jackson are combined by a little episode of which I am still rather proud. Bradshaw, like many other scholars of retired habits, was occasionally brusque in his manner and thereby gave offence without meaning it. On some trifling occasion he did offend Jackson in this way, so that for a long time they were not on speaking terms. This was a grief to me as a friend of both, and with the daring of youth I invited them to meet in my rooms. If I had been older and more experienced I should have reflected on the risk: in case of failure my officiousness would only leave matters rather worse, at the cost to myself of having displeased them both. But faith and audacity prevailed; the meeting came off and was quite successful, the former unlucky incident not being mentioned at all: and they remained friends till the last day of Bradshaw's life.<sup>1</sup> My purpose in recalling a matter so far off and so small in the world's eyes (though the reconciliation of two good men estranged without good cause is no small matter in spiritual truth)

<sup>1</sup> This is literal fact: see G. W. Prothero, *Memoir of Henry Bradshaw*, p. 321.

is to encourage you, if ever a like chance comes in your way, not to be afraid of taking it. Bradshaw, I may add, had many attached friends of all ages, who knew even less of his multifarious learning than I did.

Aldis Wright, for many years Vice-Master of the College, was one of the seniors whom I knew pretty well, keeping up our relations both on my visits to Cambridge and by occasional correspondence. He has an honourable place in the world of letters as a joint and in fact the most active editor of the Cambridge Shakespeare, and as a constant friend of Edward FitzGerald and editor of his literary remains. His remedy for a common cold was heroic: it was to drink a bottle of Trinity audit ale the last thing at night. I never tried it myself, but should think that, like certain Alpine passes, it can hardly be recommended for general adoption. He had a standing difference with the Master in the matter of Latin pronunciation. Montagu Butler was an enthusiast for the reformed method, Aldis Wright a stickler for the old-fashioned English schoolboy way, not yet extinct among men much younger than myself. Now the College grace before meat is in Latin and in two parts, taken by the Master and the Vice-Master when present. The result was that Montagu Butler opened by delivering the first versicle, 'Oculi omnium in te sperant, Domine,' with the full Italian vowels, rolling them on his tongue with gusto, and Aldis Wright snapped out the response, 'Et tu das escam illis in tempore,' with obstinate insistence on the hard English sounds, and so on

to the end. For my part I am inclined to think our reformers might have done better to treat Latin as a living tongue and adopt the Italian pronunciation bodily, not attempting to restore the hard consonants *c* and *g* which were already softened in the early Middle Ages at latest. At any rate this would have made it easier for our Latinists to speak Latin with Continental scholars, a thing less rare than those who have no Latin imagine ; and it would have made the transition less difficult for English learners. But this is only a personal opinion, and I may be singular in it for aught I know.

Another friend of Edward FitzGerald, who as his instructor in Persian may justly be called the true begetter of his translation, at first neglected but now famous, of Omar Khayyám, was E. B. Cowell, the first Cambridge Professor of Sanskrit. I have spoken elsewhere<sup>1</sup> of what I learnt from him. The elements of Sanskrit, which I had not time to pursue when I left Cambridge, are mostly forgotten, but Cowell's introduction to Indian philosophy and Indian ways of thought remains as a permanent possession. The Calcutta pundits may well have thought of Cowell, as they did of his predecessor Wilson, that in some former life he must have been a learned Brahman, and had to expiate some great sin by being born again as a European. He left me the memory of a great master so prodigal of his wisdom that he would

<sup>1</sup> Geo. Cowell, ' Life and Letters of Edward Byles Cowell, 1904,' Appendix I (article reprinted from the extinct *Pilot* with some errors for which I am not answerable).

take infinite pains to enlighten his humblest scholar, and an admirable friend. In those early days I little thought that, as editor of the Law Reports, I should find my little Sanskrit and a moderate acquaintance with Persian of appreciable use in checking the more enormous faults of copyists and printers that often threaten to disfigure proper names and technical terms in the Indian Appeals series.

Oxford did not receive me wholly as a stranger when I became a member of the University and an official Fellow of Corpus. There were links through Etonian friends who had gone to Oxford, notably Sir William Anson, already Warden of All Souls. In my undergraduate days I had taken part in a joint field-day of the two University Rifle Corps ; Oxford then wore a rather fanciful uniform of very light bluish-grey with Oxford blue facings. Ten years later, in 1875, the Inns of Court Corps paid a much more businesslike visit : two provisional companies of us did two days' route march from Taplow, spent two nights in billets at High Wycombe and Thame, marched in over Shotover Hill in skirmishing order, were reinforced by the rest of the battalion coming from London, and did a brigade drill with the University Corps (who had then changed into scarlet) in the Parks. It was an amusing and instructive variation of the routine work. But these military antiquities (of the muzzle-loading Enfield and the Snider days) taught me nothing of Oxford beyond its general aspect. A flying visit soon after I took my degree had shown me something of the younger dons who were

then leading the Liberal movement in the University. Liberalism had then something to fight for. It was a matter of hot controversy whether the universities would survive admitting Nonconformists to the Master's degree (subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles was not an academic but a parliamentary requirement, enacted by Charles II's Act of Uniformity, though doubtless approved in the universities). The late Lord Reay, then Baron Mackay, one of the really cosmopolitan men of my time, was conspicuous in that group of young Liberals, preparing himself to take his part later as a British peer and ultimately as President of the British Academy. Bishop Creighton was a Merton resident, and William Sidgwick, the less known but hardly less able brother of the two Cambridge scholars already mentioned, was a vigorous and unconventional tutor. Once he lectured in breeches and boots in order to go straight away to a hunt. Arthur Sidgwick, the youngest of the three, was annexed by Corpus Christi College of its direct choice before I was annexed under the terms of the foundation (largely due to a President of Corpus) of the Jurisprudence chair. He was one of the excellent teachers, more in number than the world suspects, who leave but little in print to tell of the good work they have done, a delightful companion, and a pillar of the Pelican Essay Club, which was, as it still is, among the distinctions of a small but distinguished college. We had quite good discussions, and the apostolic spirit which puts seniors and juniors at their ease together was not lacking. Without the Pelican I should have



missed knowing Charles Plummer as well as I did. He was a very learned historical specialist, modest to a fault ; in general company he seemed carefully to conceal his wide humanity and his accomplished command of modern letters. Let me mention (since you may well know no more than I tell you about Corpus Christi College and its foundation by that great humanist Bishop Fox of Winchester) that the Pelican ' in her piety ' was our Founder's device : whereby hangs the tale of a novel public-house sign. While I was still attached to Corpus, in 1898, I was the first chairman of a small company (later taken over by the People's Refreshment House Association) formed to establish and conduct an inn at Grayshott on the border of Surrey and Hampshire and in the diocese of Winchester. A sign had to be found for the new house. The conjunction of a site in Fox's diocese and the ancient estates of his see with a chairman who was a member of his own foundation was irresistible, and we chose ' The Fox and Pelican.' Walter Crane painted us a mighty pretty signboard (long since taken indoors to be preserved as a memorial, and replaced by a copy). No questions were asked about it ; I suppose most customers took it for an ancient sign. I told Bishop Stubbs and he approved with a hearty laugh. So the sign of the ' Fox and Pelican ' at Grayshott has the benefit, I should think unique among signboards, of an episcopal blessing.

Another new friend in Corpus was Professor Schiller, a philosopher outside the regular academic lines ; if he recognized any one as his master it was

William James. But Pragmatism has never been a definite school. His independent thought and incisive dialectic were a wholesome stimulating influence in the general revision of speculative values. Almost as unlike a typical Oxford teacher of philosophy, or a typical don of any kind, was our President, Tommy Fowler, as he was commonly called, a first-rate man of business, such as the depressed state of the College revenues after a series of bad years for agriculture then demanded, and an excellent chairman. We took a liking to one another from the first. He was a sturdy, clear-headed man of the north-east, from the borders of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, and never abandoned his country speech. Once Mark Pattison was asked how many languages Fowler spoke. 'None,' he answered, making it rhyme to 'on.' Whereby, my grandson, you may perceive in part to what extent the supposed Oxford accent is mythical. In fact there is no such thing as an Oxford accent ; there is or was a peculiar accent or rather intonation which was the badge not of Oxford in general but of Balliol. Not that you could have picked it up from the Master of Balliol, who was also one of the most prominent figures in the University. Jowett's manner of speech was all his own.

Jowett's real genius has never, I think, been duly appreciated in public. I tried to do it some justice in a memoir of my learned friend Sir Courtenay Ilbert written for the *Proceedings* of the British Academy and therein lying buried. As hardly any one outside that body can have read it, I will repeat what I said there.

Jowett did much to promote scholarship, but he was not a great scholar; much to promote liberal thought, but he was not a great thinker; much excellent work in administration and affairs, but there were others who excelled him in mastery of University business. In one art he was without a rival, that of fitting his pupils to make the very most of their capacities, and not only to be but to appear all that they were worth. . . . Jowett's disciples went forth into the world with a peculiar stamp of complete and active readiness, not without envy from competitors to whom their success had an element of mystery.

There was no mystery about the ingredients of the Balliol method. One main point was the constant practice of essay-writing under the tutor's critical supervision with special attention to style and effect. Yet the working of it had somehow the air of a trade secret, for there was something almost uncanny in its success. I knew two brothers of whom one went to Cambridge and the other to Balliol; there did not appear to be any great difference in their abilities. The Cambridge man did some respectable work, not without approval from good judges, and for a time seemed to be in a way to prosper. But his work did not improve, nothing quite came off, and he never got beyond being a second-rate professional writer. The Balliol man made his reputation as a good scholar, though not in the first rank, and in due time held a distinguished post. Criticism of the training that produced such results was frequent and free in other colleges. Old-fashioned scholars thought it no better than a trick. The Balliol answer would, I suppose, be much like that which

a Tavistock man made when he was asked why all the rest of South Devon made a joke of Tavistock : ' They'm jealous.' Mark Pattison, a learned and fastidious humanist of the old school, once let himself go concerning the Balliol tuition, which he regarded as superficial and mischievous, in private conversation with me. I do not remember exactly what he said, but should not feel at liberty to repeat it if I did.

A great Oxford scholar who stood above all such local controversies was Ingram Bywater, a *grand seigneur* of Hellenic learning who embodied the best tradition of the Renaissance. There was no Oxford exclusiveness about him ; as a leading master in the language and letters of Greece, and especially in Aristotelian studies, he was a friend of Henry Jackson's. Besides his profound and accurate scholarship he had an extraordinary knowledge of books and bibliography. When I was at work on Spinoza he told me of several controversial treatises which had escaped the notice of that very careful and competent recorder of Spinoza literature, Van der Linde.

It was my fortune to be personally acquainted with four leading Oxford historians of my time, so different from one another as to afford a complete refutation of the vulgar belief that all Oxford professors are of one pattern. No young man who held converse with Stubbs, Freeman, Froude and York Powell could complain of monotony ; he might rather be perplexed by their many disagreements. The generous and well-balanced wisdom of Stubbs, the downright confidence of Freeman

in his own conclusions (often rash, but never a merely arbitrary dogmatism), the subtle and rather enigmatic intellect of Froude, which could combine minute study of documents with sublime disregard of elementary facts, and the versatile ingenuity of York Powell, made up a field of immense variety, and studious youth might, with a little discretion, find profit in every part of it. Stubbs and York Powell both had plenty of humour ; Freeman had none ; and Froude's was of the sarcastic sort that rather inflames than discourages literary strife. Good-tempered humour is a great antidote to the quarrels and follies of mankind, and it kept both York Powell and Stubbs out of personal controversy, whereas Freeman and Froude lived in a chronic state of contention with one another or with some one else. In the case of Stubbs his moderation and good temper have been obscured by the bungling cocksureness of obtuse disciples who read into their master's work general assertions which he never made. Some of them were history tutors and could plead the necessity of furnishing dull pupils with easily remembered catchwords for examination purposes. If the facts were not so simple, so much the worse for the facts. Those who knew Stubbs knew that he was wholly free from arrogance and formalism, and as ready as any man to admit on convincing evidence that he had been wrong. Stubbs is not usually counted, I think, among the more readable historians ; it is true that his great work, the *Constitutional History*, is too close packed to leave much room for literary grace. One must go to his lectures

to see how he could write when he had elbow-room.

York Powell, the least familiar to the general public of these four, was the one whom nine men out of ten would have chosen for a travelling companion. He knew everything except the art of keeping his knowledge and its instruments in order. Formal lectures were his abhorrence, but from a quarter of an hour's talk with him there was more to be learnt (not to speak of the pure enjoyment of the talk) than from most regular lectures. One admirable short history of England to the end of the Middle Ages, which he wrote for a scholastic series, lies buried in the small print of a school-book produced, like most cheap school-books, in the scrubbiest and least attractive manner. It ought to be reprinted in a worthier form. York Powell was in a general way the enemy of conventions; but, as a finishing touch of paradox, he was one of the last Oxford residents who habitually wore a tall hat. He did not bear a Welsh name for nothing: he had the Celtic fertility of imagination and temperamental artistic instinct. So he could tell you just how a book ought to be bound, and even get it done for you if you were a personal friend. I have Indian lithographed copies of Háfiz's *Díván* and Sa'di's *Gulistán* beautifully and appropriately clothed under his direction by the pupils of an art school of which he was a promoter.

So much to give you a summary notion of my Cambridge, and later Oxford, seniors and contemporaries. As to the public aspects of university life—new buildings, new and expanded institu-

tions, development of organized sports, and all the rest—they are amply recorded and described in print, and I have nothing of my own to add.

Our two ancient universities, taken together, stand alone in the world. Directly or indirectly they derive their origin from Paris, and a trace of this remains in the Bachelor's degree, which still exists in France and, I believe, nowhere else on the Continent. But the many foundations of colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, and their relation to the University as all but sovereign states in a federal union, present a singular type of academic constitution. Compared with one another, Oxford and Cambridge are sisters with a strong family likeness, but also with distinct individual qualities. Differences in the names of similar things occur wherever similar institutions have grown up on parallel lines, and here we find plenty of them. It would be fanciful to seek any deeper cause for such variances as an undergraduate not on the foundation being a commoner at Oxford and a pensioner at Cambridge, or for Cambridge colleges having their peculiar gowns, while at Oxford there is only a general distinction between scholars and commoners, or to consider curiously why there are courts at Cambridge and quads at Oxford, and either would be a solecism in the Eton School Yard.

Many foolish people, and some who are no fools, call our Universities effete and useless. Putting aside the cases of wilful slander and mere careless ignorance, those who talk in this manner are either too stupid to understand anything outside their

own petty experience or too clever to believe it possible they should be mistaken. Meanwhile it is pleasing to note that the rulers of American universities are of a different opinion. President Lowell, the diligent and enlightened head of Harvard, was at the date of my recent visit in 1930 engaged on a plan for adapting to his University, without servile imitation, something of the social discipline and amenities of our college system. Execution of this plan is now well advanced, and I understand that it is fully answering the President's expectation.

The seven Liberal Arts and the three superior Faculties of the medieval schools cannot hold within their categories our new branches of learning. But the scheme was well laid down for its time, and the spirit and intention of distinguishing between general and special education have not ceased to be sound. We may still cite in grateful remembrance of our fathers, if we do not stand on the letter, the noble saying of a nameless wise man, which may well have determined the number of the Liberal Arts : Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.



### CHAPTER III

#### MEN OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE

ONE of my earliest distinct memories is of evenings at home when my father used to read out Waverley novels and my mother Shakespeare plays. I do not know on what principle the novels were selected ; they did not include all of the best and they did include some that are not of the best. Special favourites were *The Talisman* and *A Legend of Montrose*. Riper judgment, I need hardly tell you, does not put these in the same class, but I am free to maintain that *The Talisman* is underrated nowadays. King Richard, Saladin, and Dugald Dalgetty were among my first acquaintances in the world of fiction. Of the longer novels *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward* were, I think, the most attractive. Boys of school age could not, of course, appreciate the finer touches of Scottish character and atmosphere, still less did the Wardour Street antiquities of *Ivanhoe* trouble them. For that matter our elders troubled themselves little if at all about the manifold blunders which now fly in one's face. I suppose they accepted Zerneck as some kind of Scandinavian or rather 'Saxon' devil ; their descendants, having more philological curiosity and much handier means of

information, can easily perceive that he is a Slavonic one (*Chěrný Bog*, black god) seen through German spectacles. Walter Scott must have fished him out of the lumber of some German Wardour Street. For the rest, his blunders were only the common ones of contemporary antiquaries. But my private opinion is that Peacock's *Maid Marian* beats *Ivanhoe* all round, and not only by its capital merit of being written in natural English.

Some of Scott's very best work, such as *Old Mortality* and *The Heart of Midlothian*, stood over for years of discretion. As to Shakespeare, my mother was devoted to the theatre (of which I shall have more to say), and the plays she read were such as kept the stage. She was an excellent dramatic reader; *King Henry V*, with its pleasing mixture of serious and comic elements, gave her full scope, and we (my brother Walter and I) liked it best of all. So I have loved Fluellen from my boyhood, and I persist in honouring the King with my friend of later years, Sir Walter Raleigh, and against Mr. Masefield's too ingenious notion that Shakespeare was laughing at him and the audience in his sleeve. In the last long vacation before my degree at Cambridge I did homage to Captain Fluellen by turning the scene where he makes Pistol eat the leek into Aristophanic dialogue. My version was praised by two fine scholars, Shilleto when it was new, and Swinburne when I published it twenty-five years later, so I may say without vanity that it was not amiss. The point of it lay in perceiving that mock Homeric

hexameters were the fitting Greek equivalent—fitting like a glove—of Pistol's ranting lines.

Now Scott is by no means the whole of the English novel, and even Shakespeare is not the whole of the English drama ; but for a grounding in English letters I know nothing better than Shakespeare and Walter Scott—together with the Authorized Version, which in the Victorian Age came of itself—and I still thank my parents for my setting forth on those sound lines. In due time I was encouraged to read Jane Austen, and introduced to Sterne by my father (not by my mother, who did not care much for the eighteenth-century novels and not at all for *Tristram Shandy*).

Later, when my brother and I were old enough to take minor parts, we had occasional Shakespeare readings. Note that Shakespeare reading clubs were not uncommon ; at Trinity the honour men who came back for two months' work in the long vacation had a regular one, with a lapse into Sheridan now and then. One of our domestic readings is still vivid in my memory ; the play was *Twelfth Night*, and W. H. Brookfield doubled the parts of Malvolio and Feste. The fates made Brookfield a quite competent country parson and an accomplished pulpit orator ; at one time he preached at the Rolls Chapel, where the Record Office Museum now is. Nature had given him an excellent and rather ironical wit, commemorated by the late Sir George Trevelyan in his pretty topical diversion *The Ladies in Parliament*<sup>1</sup> :

<sup>1</sup> 1867, reprinted in *Interludes in Verse and Prose*, 1905 (not a prophecy of votes for women).

When Brookfield has hit on his happiest vein  
And Harcourt is capping the jokes of Delane.

But Nature, above all, intended Brookfield to be a great actor; the fates made partial amends for their perversity by allowing a son of his to be a good one. I have seen *Twelfth Night* very well acted more than once, but never a rendering of the scene between Malvolio in the cellar and the Fool personating Sir Topas that was equal to Brookfield's.

Another constant friend of my parents who was no less devoted to Shakespeare, though not in the same way, was James Spedding. He is best known as the editor, biographer and champion of Francis Bacon; Shakespearian students know that he was eminent among their fellowship and contributed many valuable critical notes on the text to the great Cambridge edition. Edward FitzGerald, no mean judge, thought, and said several times in his letters, that Spedding ought to have edited Shakespeare himself. Probably no other English scholar has been so complete a master of both Shakespeare's and Bacon's works. He saw no reason to depart from the vulgar opinion that each of them wrote most of his own, and neither of them wrote any of the other's: but that is a topic I shall not pursue. As for his vindication of Bacon's character, which lies almost crushed by its own volume, it is much nearer the truth than Macaulay's indictment, although the elaborate argument must seem to the casual reader to protest too much. Macaulay's censure on the

man is only less inept than his panegyric on the philosopher, and with less excuse.

The temptation to expand Pope's epigrammatic contrast between the wisest and the meanest of mankind ran away with him, as a like temptation led him to maintain the more glaring paradox that the best biography in the English language was the work of a fool and a sot. It would be hard now to find any man who believes in Macaulay's Boswell : the day will come when very few are left to believe in Macaulay's Bacon. Certainly Bacon makes no heroic figure in the turbid world of Elizabethan public life : neither his qualities nor his defects were those proper to heroes. We may be disappointed at finding him, in that world, neither better nor worse than his fellows. But that is no reason for treating him as a criminal.<sup>1</sup>

Carlyle's judgment, in a letter written to Fitzgerald on the completion of Spedding's work, is worth recalling :

Bacon is washed clean down to the natural skin ; [not whitewashed as E. F. G. would have it] and truly he is not nor ever was unlovely to me ; a man of no culpability to speak of ; of an opulent and even magnificent intellect, but all in the magnificent prose vein. Nothing or almost nothing of the 'melodies eternal' to be traced in him. Spedding's Book will last as long as there is any earnest memory held of Bacon, or of the age of James VI, upon whom as upon every stirring man in his epoch Spedding has shed new veritable illumination ; in almost the whole of which I perfectly coincided with

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<sup>1</sup> Long ago I went into the details in reviewing books written by worthy persons who must needs judge Bacon as if he had lived in the nineteenth century.

Spedding . . . There is a grim strength in Spedding, quietly, very quietly invincible, which I did not quite know of till this Book; and in all ways I could congratulate the indefatigably patient, placidly invincible and victorious Spedding.<sup>1</sup>

James Spedding had no turn for being either an actor or a dramatist, but he knew the living stage and was a fine critic of both the poet's and the actor's dramatic art. I went to the play with him at least once as a very young man, and when I knew more we rejoiced together in the revival of serious English acting. You may read something of this in the few published writings, outside the Baconian *opus magnum*, to which Spedding set his hand. Likewise you may find many passages about Spedding in the *Letters of Edward FitzGerald* (1809-83),<sup>2</sup> another lifelong friend of my father's. He was a dilettante in the best sense, a man of good Irish family who was fond of insisting on his Irishry, possessing a competence which enabled him to live in his own frugal and retired fashion and to use his scholarly gifts by writing what, when, and how he pleased. He combined a genius for intimate friendship with dislike for publicity and an increasing distaste for making new acquaintances among either persons or books. All his work was individual and distinguished: it includes one classic in verse—his rendering of

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Edward FitzGerald*, ii. 176; dated 6 Nov. 1874.

<sup>2</sup> One of the best short accounts of FitzGerald is the anonymous biographical preface to the carefully edited collection of his works in two volumes, published in New York and London, 1887.

Omar Khayyám, probably more read than any other long English poem produced in the nineteenth century—and one in prose, the exquisite dialogue ‘Euphranor,’ which remains the delight of a few. His literary taste was almost infallible, but within a sharply defined boundary; it was as if a final curtain had come down on the scene about 1850. Not even lifelong friendship moved him to take any interest in Tennyson’s later poems. I do not think he ever read a line of Swinburne, and the later Victorian novelists were nothing to him. But an Irishman has to be a rebel against something; in FitzGerald’s case rebellion broke out in contempt of sartorial conventions. He did not even invent a congruous new fashion of dress for himself, but was just slovenly in an eccentric manner. This was too much for one biographer, excellently qualified though he was to appreciate FitzGerald as a man of letters. His remarks on FitzGerald’s personal habits and temperament were meant to be sympathetic, but left a taste of patronizing compassion.

*Allora dissi questo canzonetto in modo di sirviente :*

Said A. C. B. to E. F. G.—

How sad to see

That E. F. G.

Was not like me :

How could that be ?

Said E. F. G. to A. C. B.—

Because, you see,

An E. F. G.

Like A. C. B.

Would not be Me—

And UBD.

As concerning James Spedding, FitzGerald's letters include, besides regrets for his devotion to Bacon, innocent mirth provoked by his lofty and hairless forehead. In 1840 FitzGerald wrote to Frederic Tennyson :<sup>1</sup>

That portrait of Spedding, for instance, which Laurence [the painter S. Laurence] has given me: not swords, nor cannon, nor all the Bulls of Bashan butting at it, could, I feel sure, discompose that venerable forehead. No wonder that no hair can grow at such an altitude: no wonder his view of Bacon's virtue is so rarefied that the common conscience of men cannot endure it. Thackeray and I occasionally amuse ourselves with the idea of Spedding's forehead: we find it somehow or other in all things, just peering out of all things: you see it in a milestone, Thackeray says. He also draws the forehead rising with a sober light over Mont Blanc and reflected in the lake of Geneva.

And in the following years, talking of meeting in London: 'We will all sit under the calm shadow of Spedding's forehead.' I possess it as drawn by Thackeray about that time in pen and ink, not caricatured, while Spedding was dozing in my father's chambers in the Temple. There was a tradition that Carlyle once reported having identified the same landmark in the reading-room of the British Museum: 'Over the top of a desk I perceived a clean white round shining object, and this was the head of him.' My own first effort in logical classification was when, as a very small boy, I was warned, on James Spedding being announced, that I must not make any

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, ed. 1894, i. 77, 83.



remark on his baldness. Now Dean Merivale was already known to me by sight. The visitor entered. I took a good look at him, and then said, 'Mr. Medivale is a bald man too,' thus literally observing the tabu.

Edward FitzGerald was never known to me in person. As I have said, he disliked making new acquaintances, and my father would not venture to propose an introduction. Still I have two mementos of him: one is a very fine plate of Lowestoft china which he sent me as a wedding present without any direct communication; I wrote him a letter of thanks, but there was no rejoinder. The other, even more precious, is the collection of his letters to my father, a large part of them published by Aldis Wright. There is one story I wanted Wright to print, but he would not. Whether his editorial discretion was at the time excessive or not, I think the world should have it now, and here it is.

Do you know my story about h'alliblasted?—If not ask Spedding to tell it you: or shall I finish my letter with it?—I will. Two whores were slanging each other on the Bridge at Bedford: one was fair & the other dark—'Ah (says the fair one) you'd best hold your tongue, you brown bitch'—'Better be a brown bitch (says the other) than a damned *halliblasted* beauty like you'—that was her idea of *alabaster*. Now this is a true story as you must see from its simplicity: and a very fine one as you *will* see when its esoteric odour steals upon you. Leave it in your mind carelessly, without trying to be much amused at first: you will find it after many days—for it involves a good outward picture, & a good metaphysical confusion in the reaching

after language. I deserve to be kicked for pretending to analyze it—Let us say Grace after it in simple truth as Lamb recommended—the rule is—Open your mouth & shut your eyes & take what God provides you.<sup>1</sup>

Earlier in the letter E. F. G. professed himself unable to hit a tree with a pistol at ten yards : on which there is nothing to say but that it is much harder to shoot straight with a pistol than any one knows who has not tried.

My interest in Persian poetry, which might have opened an approach to FitzGerald if it had come in time, did not begin till ten years after his death. It may be worth while to note, in contradiction of a mistake I have seen in print at least once, that he was a very good Persian scholar : I had his master Cowell's word for it. His versions were free and often ran into paraphrase, not for want of knowledge but because it was not his nature to be a close translator, as he said himself. The same thing happened with his handling of Spanish and Greek originals. Various passages in Omar Khayyám suggest a misreading ; in one case, the best known, Cowell was satisfied that there was a real and traceable mistake ; in others, I am inclined to think, the departure was wilful.

It would, of course, be absurd to maintain that FitzGerald or any other translator was infallible : indeed one may find rather surprising slips and misunderstandings in translations of Persian texts made by professed scholars from Sir William Jones himself downwards. On the other hand, FitzGerald's accuracy is in one or two places vindicated

<sup>1</sup> July 21, 1839.

by the reading of the Calcutta MS., of which he used a copy.

In any case Omar owes most of his modern celebrity to FitzGerald's English; the austere simplicity of his Persian did not please the taste of later generations brought up on the ornamented elegance of their later medieval classics. FitzGerald, on the other hand, was less in tune with those masters, though he translated selections from them and thought Jalál-ud-dín's great mystical poem the *Masnaví* 'a much finer thing than Omar.'<sup>1</sup>

Edward FitzGerald's place among our classical letter-writers is assured; in that list, of perhaps a dozen names from Dorothy Osborne to my friend Sir Walter Raleigh, he stands nearest, as I judge, in spirit as well as in time to Charles Lamb, whom I cannot think of without a feeling of lifelong affection. It began with a happy accident. The prize books of private schools in my youth were mostly publishers' remainders, tricked out in a very poor calf gilt binding offensive to ripper eyes and clammy to the touch. But sometimes a good book slipped in among them; and at my first school I got for a prize Lamb's works collected in one solid volume; in those days double columns and rather small print were no hindrance. Nobody told me that I ought to admire Elia, nor anything about him, which perhaps was as well. Alone he enthralled me from the first, catching me, no doubt, with a rather childish delight in the

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mrs. Cowell, in G. Cowell's *Life and Letters of Edward Byles Cowell*, 1904, p. 239.

more obvious humours, those, for example, of the Dissertation on Roast Pig. The greater matters were beyond a schoolboy's compass, but my worship was sound as far as it went, and understanding was added in due course. I am not sure that in a Santa Conversazione of English authors Charles Lamb would not be the one I should most long to talk with—if Swinburne did not monopolize him, but one must imagine that monopolies are not possible in Elysium.

Whether FitzGerald was at all comparable to Lamb as a talker is a question I have no means of answering ; nor indeed would I venture to define a good talker. Some men and women are delightful companions to their friends, and yet one cannot remember in particular anything they said ; and I incline to think FitzGerald's conversation was of the kind that is directed, so far as it has any distinct aim, to drawing out others, and lets the speaker's own qualities disclose themselves as it were by accident. Certainly he was not the man to hold a company through a whole morning by monologue, as Macaulay is credibly reported to have done. Whether such masters of monologue are properly to be counted as talkers at all may be doubtful : conversation as a social art implies a reasonable proportion of give and take, and the really eminent talkers are those who can lead without dominating. Taking the different sorts of talk all round, I think the reputation of the Victorian Age will stand well in your generation. In London educated society was still compact, and leisure was more abundant than it is in the

twentieth century. So good talk, no longer having definite centres, is nowadays less easy to find, though it is by no means extinct (neither, by the way, is good letter-writing, which in fact was never common). On the other hand, conditions have become no worse at the Universities and are in some ways better. Every college is a natural centre of conversation; Oxford common rooms and Cambridge combination rooms provide excellent opportunities for developing it. Increased knowledge of the world and increased variety of interests among the residents are all to the good. Again, there is little danger of talk being reduced to a commonplace level by conventional uniformities. The members of the company are citizens in a genuine republic of letters where no one need be afraid of seeming provincial. Not that I have a mind to disparage London. Besides a certain number of clubs, the Inns of Court perform sociable functions not much unlike those of the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges, only their activity is less continuous; and certainly there is no lack of good company there. If you ask me whether any distinct characters can be ascribed to the merits of London, Oxford and Cambridge conversation, I should say that London excels in the anecdotic manner (I do not mean a mere string of stories, but talk with anecdotes for text), Oxford in the dialectic play of wits, and Cambridge in frank and disinterested discussion. Be these refinements as they may, I trust you will live to enjoy to the full that purest of human pleasures, company from which you come away prepared

to say with Dr. Johnson: 'Sir, we had good talk.'

The art of conversation as practised in France is matter, in the Aristotelian phrase, for separate consideration. Your acquaintance with it ought to be both earlier and fuller than mine, so I will only say that its fundamental principle is the common entertainment of the company: the breaking up into detached groups of two or three which is a besetting sin of English social gatherings would be a breach of good manners in Paris. Educated French talk at its best is probably the best in the world, and educated women had their full share in it long before modern feminism was heard of.

When we consider the merits of talk we assume a gathering of not less than three, for a conversation between two persons may be of great interest, good things may chance to be said in it, and we may wish we could have overheard it, but two do not make a talking company. If the two parties have topics in common and have any faculty for expressing themselves, and their points of view are not hopelessly discordant, there is no skill needed to make them entertaining to one another. Interviews given with a view to publication, and discourse with persons known or believed to take notes, as, for instance, Goethe's with Eckermann, are obviously in a class apart. For the rest, interviewing has its due place among the minor arts of literature, and goes back to Boswell as its first and true inventor in this country, though he excelled strictly as an independent reporter.

The opposite of a good talker is a bore: but of

bores I do not care to say anything except that the most ferocious of them are the conscientious prigs who think they have a mission. At one time I had to suffer many things from a portentous example of that variety. A man with a sense of humour cannot be a true bore, though he may be prolix or speak out of season. Whether two bores can possibly bore one another is a subtle question which I leave to be disputed by the wits of your generation.<sup>1</sup> I should like to believe it, for the punishment would be most fitting. To be naturally bore-proof is a gift of fortune enjoyed by some cheerful and kindly people. It is also possible to acquire the art of suffering bores if not gladly yet with a civil countenance, and in public life this is a safeguard against one way of making enemies. Those who have not the gift and fail to learn the art may be prejudiced by the lack of them even if they are charming in congenial company. Such was Arthur Balfour's case for one, if I mistake not.

There is no reason in England why women should not talk as well as men except such as are fast becoming out of date, a narrower range of experience and comparative lack of opportunity. My own fortune has been to know many persons whose company was or happily still is delightful, but few whom, speaking positively from first-hand observation, I can call good talkers in the limited sense I have explained. Among those one of the most eminent was a woman; if I were writing for contemporaries I could almost leave them to guess: but all this will for you be ancient history, so I

<sup>1</sup> See footnote p. 110 below.

name Gertrude Bell. She combined all the qualities: an ample store of matter in travel and adventure which not many men could rival, wide curiosity guided by keen intellect, readiness in speech, great power of expression, and the crowning virtue of never showing off. She was not only a great traveller and explorer but a complete mountaineer: she had one escape from an all but desperate situation, in which the party was saved largely by her courage and self-possession. She could discuss high and deep matters in classical Arabic with a learned Moslem Sheikh, and slang a camel-driver in the colloquial. In Persian she could, as a recreation, write exquisite translations of Háfiz's odes: for those who have no Persian I may say that the difficulties are akin to those of translating Horace, which Calverley alone surmounted, and that in only a few pieces. Gertrude Bell's work stands on the level of Calverley's. But one might have waited long to learn any of these things from herself otherwise than as they came out by accident. It was a loss to the British Empire, to the world of letters, above all to Iraq, that she did not live longer, and a lamentable surprise to her older friends: it is but a slight consolation to one of them to say these few words in her praise.

George Eliot would have been a good talker if George Lewes had not posed her as a pontiff and allowed only one visitor at a time to speak to her: the case of Swinburne is not wholly dissimilar. At least one living woman writer of English birth is an excellent talker; she lives in Paris and has



there perfected herself in the art. Any common friend who sees these lines will know whom I mean, but for you who otherwise would not I make bold to name Madame Duclaux.

Among men whom I have known as distinguished talkers I give the first place without doubt to Renan. He was supreme both in the art of guiding conversation and in his own contributions. I must not forget that he had excellent backers in Monsieur and Madame Berthelot, who were frequent guests at his house. (Their son René has just now—1931—published a book full of wisdom, *La sagesse de Shakespeare et de Goethe*, a book which would have delighted Renan.) One day when they were with him talk fell on the siege of Paris in 1870, then within pretty recent memory. All agreed that the Parisians showed much dignified endurance and on the whole deserved great credit. A small dining club to which Renan and Berthelot belonged carried on its meetings without a break, and took such food as the provider could supply without asking indiscreet questions about its origin. (The excellent host of the small hotel where I put up in those days contrived to keep his cat alive in the cellar all the time, but when Grisgris came out, never having been very tame, he was a wild thing tractable only to his master; I saw him once and was warned not to touch him.) Madame Berthelot lived in the St.-Michel quarter during the siege; one day, coming back from some errand, she found an unexploded German shell on her best arm-chair. There was a like incident at the bombardment of Alexandria

in 1882, when one of the heavy shells of the old battleship *Inflexible* (don't confuse her, my grandson, with the later and more illustrious battle-cruiser) landed in an English merchant's house, which it would have wrecked if it had burst. The house being a friendly one in this case, a party of blue-jackets called a day or two afterwards with the captain's compliments and apologies, wrapped up the shell in a blanket with all due caution, and carried it back in a leisurely and peaceable manner.

To return to England, I suppose Abraham Hayward had the greatest reputation among the mid-Victorian talkers, but I was too much junior to him to be in his company. Those whom I do remember were not a few, and so little alike that their merits are hard to compare. Three stand out in my recollections, Kinglake, the historian of the Crimean War; Sir Alfred Lyall, and Sir Henry Maine. Kinglake was second only to Napier as a military narrator, and in the political introduction and episodes he showed himself a brilliant though not impartial publicist. People who think the Crimean War wholly obsolete forget that the siege of Sebastopol was not a siege 'in due form' at all, but trench warfare against an uninvested position. However, the author's literary fame rests on his earlier book of travels *Eothen*, which is not only short enough even for the scant leisure of modern readers but of general interest in no way diminished by the lapse of time. Moreover, the style has a charm of natural freshness which could not be recaptured in the later and

more elaborate work: such is the judgment of an excellent and friendly biographer.<sup>1</sup> However that may be, Kinglake did not talk the least like a professed historian or a dealer in travellers' tales, but as an accomplished man of the world. He could go back to the days when he practised as a junior on the Western Circuit, or appreciate the charm of Mme Olga Novikoff's company with the taste of an expert and a friend, while his intellect wholly refused to be moved by her political persuasion. (For my own part I hardly think she was a tactful missionary. The first time I met her she tried to make me believe that Paul Vinogradoff, obnoxious to her as a Liberal, was no more remarkable than a dozen other men in Moscow; the effect on a man who already knew Vinogradoff fairly well was to warn him once for all against putting his trust in anything Mme Novikoff said. She lived to find herself in line, during the War, with many Russians whom she had formerly treated as enemies of Holy Russia.) Kinglake's judgments of mankind were shrewd, clear-cut, and with very few exceptions dispassionate, and his expression of them not less so. Your grandparents and I were on most friendly terms with him, a common ground of scholarship helping. He was pleased when, setting a composition paper in a Trinity examination, I gave a choice passage of his invective against Louis Napoleon to be done into Latin prose: it invited of course a Tacitean rather than a Ciceronian

<sup>1</sup> W. Tuckwell, *A. W. Kinglake*, Lond. 1902, p. 88. For the friendship with Mme Novikoff see ch. 5 of that book.

manner. It would be digressing too far to consider how the whitewash lately applied to that enigmatic adventurer will wear in the long run. Doubtless he was not the mere villain that Kinglake painted, and his tragic downfall compels pity: but nothing will make me believe that he was capable of settled purpose (beyond restoring the Napoleonic dynasty and glorifying its traditions) or of statesmanlike foresight.

No man of statesmanlike sense would have fallen into the net spread by Bismarck when he put forward a Hohenzollern candidate for the throne of Spain. Louis Napoleon could have caught Bismarck in his own springe by giving out, officially or semi-officially, that a sovereign elected by popular suffrage was the last man in the world to interfere with the Spanish people in their free choice of a monarch. Then Bismarck must either have run the King of Prussia's head into a hornet's nest capable of giving no less trouble than the disastrous French adventure in Mexico, or have found some pretext for shuffling out of the business with the least possible loss of dignity and diplomatic reputation. As it was, Bismarck knew his man thoroughly and played on him as on a pipe. There was truth, though not the whole balanced truth of historical judgment, in words I heard from Carlyle's lips on Louis Napoleon's fall: 'He ran his head against a wall of adamant, and it broke like a rotten goose-egg.'

Concerning Kinglake's power of conversation I must allow myself to vouch and adopt the words of his biographer, Mr. Tuckwell:

The chief characteristic of his wit was its unexpectedness ; sometimes acrid, sometimes humorous, his sayings came forth, like Topham Beauclerk's in Dr. Johnson's day, like Talleyrand's in our own, poignant without effort. His calm, gentle voice, contrasted with his startling caustic utterance, reminded people of Prosper Mérimée : terse epigram, felicitous *apropos*, whimsical presentment of the topic under discussion, emitted in a low tone, and without the slightest change of muscle.<sup>1</sup>

Alfred Lyall was a shining exception to the rule that Englishmen who have seen and done much in India seldom talk of it. Why it should be the rule I know not, unless the reason is simply that, until I was well advanced in years, most of our people at home neither knew nor cared anything about India ; not even the Mutiny and the dethronement of the East India Company stirred them to learn, and therefore fit audience came only by chance to most of those who did know. Lyall combined long and varied experience of Indian service with an open mind and a critical intellect. He had a singular faculty of entering into ways of thought, Asiatic in general or Indian in particular, of which most Europeans can make nothing. The first hundred pages of the second series of his ' Asiatic Studies ' contain a group of letters from Vamadeo Shastri, an imaginary learned Brahman, quite capable of deceiving the elect. Some, if I remember right, were in fact deceived by the original publication in a review.

Friends and admirers of Lyall who have any

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 129, 130.

care for the historical and philosophical discussion of religion will find much to interest them in Baron Friedrich von Hügel's literary remains edited by Professor Edmund Gardner in 1931, *The Reality of God and Religion and Agnosticism*. The matter collected under the second head is in substance a study of Lyall's opinions largely founded on personal intercourse. Baron von Hügel's criticism is always well informed and illuminating, whether one agrees with his conclusions or not. He rightly makes the point that Lyall, mainly a disciple of Hume, was a pure sceptic rather than an agnostic: the distinction may be fine but is not without significance.

The same faculty appears in the *Verses written in India*. There is nothing but occasional roughness in form (if indeed that is enough) to prevent the best of these from taking a high rank among English lyrics: and such was Tennyson's opinion. They commanded the admiration of a French scholar very competent in English literature, René de Kerallain, who translated one of them. But I am now concerned with Lyall as a talker. He was at his best with companions who had the background of Indian interest in common with him. Such an one was Fitzjames Stephen. Lyall had seen active service in the Mutiny, and Stephen had been in India as Legal Member of Council when memories of that time were still fresh. I remember Lyall once explaining that the mutineers, considered merely as combatants, had put themselves outside the pale of honourable

warfare, not only according to European standards, by the murders of women and children, a thing as abhorrent to Afghans, whose custom was to give no quarter to men, as to ourselves. Added circumstances of cruelty and contumely, where they occurred, were matter of aggravation but not the essence of the offence. Presumably the leaders of the Mutiny, desperate captains of desperate men, commanded such things with the intention of holding their followers in a common bond of inexpiable outlawry. Lyall and Stephen did not invariably agree on Indian or other topics. Fitzjames Stephen's downright and almost over-conscientious definiteness of thought must have sometimes made it hard for him to follow Lyall's reasons. But it made an excellent complementary colouring, so to speak, to Lyall's versatile subtilty. Stephen and Maine were an even more perfect pair ; so may a sound, purposeful, rather literal Roman official have exchanged ideas at Athens, Corinth, or Alexandria with an accomplished Greek philosopher who was no recluse. They had in common one literary faculty not very often found among men of action. Both Maine and Stephen had been practised journalists, either of them might have been in the front rank of journalism if he had not quitted it for a larger field. Such practice in youth gives good security for coming to the point and not wasting words, which are two main qualities of good talk.

Sir Henry Maine had in conversation as in writing a peculiar way of being impressive without

effort. There was nothing striking about the man's appearance at first sight, indeed I have known few men who to the eye showed so little of themselves ; nor was there much in his words at first hearing. He was marked as a good talker by what is perhaps the highest test, the general contentment of his company. When the party broke up every man felt, without knowing why, not so much that he had listened to good talk as that he had himself been on his highest level. Maine's speech, accordingly, was seldom epigrammatic. But once he gave me a memorable short character of a certain brilliant but flighty publicist whose imagination ran to lurid pessimistic forecasts. ' I never knew,' said Maine, ' a man with so much information whose judgment was so uniformly wrong.' Another time Sir Henry Maine uttered one of the few correct political prophecies I can call to mind. It was in the last years of his life, during the interval between the disestablishment of the Irish Church and Mr. Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule. That conversion was still so little foreseen that disestablishment in England was commonly believed likely to be the next great political issue. Protectionism was supposed to be dead and buried : had not Disraeli said it was damned ? An attempt to revive it under the name of Fair Trade had been a complete failure : Joseph Chamberlain, still a champion of orthodox Free Trade economics, was foremost in contempt of the Fair Traders. Among three or four men talking round about these matters at the Athenæum Maine said that some of us would



live to see the Conservative party take up Protection again. We were incredulous, but Maine was right.

I have written elsewhere of Sir Henry Maine's published work, but I may pause to call attention to one singular point of felicity or good fortune. He was averse to the minute labour of verification and revision, and trusted largely to memory for his instances. Trust of that kind has dangers hardly to be escaped even by the most retentive memories ; and one cannot be an attentive reader of *Ancient Law* without noticing a certain number of assertions for which no authority can be found, and occasional downright mistakes in detail. But one also notes that these blots on the execution of a great design are never vital. They occur in collateral matter of illustration, and the passages that contain them might be struck out without prejudice to the main lines of the argument. I refer specially to *Ancient Law* because in his later writings Maine was more careful about his information, or more ingenious in avoiding treacherous ground. As Mephistopheles whispers to Faust 'Nur zugestossen ! ich parire,' one can almost fancy a guardian angel, but for a wholly benevolent purpose, shielding Maine in like sort. No such case of saving luck or instinct, call it what you will, is known to me among contemporaries. There is a touch of it, I think, in Montesquieu, but he is so discursive that among his anecdotic gatherings it is hard to know which are material to his point and which are not : again Montesquieu was not critical in his choice of authority, whereas Maine

chose the best then to be had, though his use of it may not always have been exact.

Quite outside this group, in the same generation, was a man of peculiar genius whose conversation had a no less peculiar charm. George Meredith was brilliant in talk beyond question, and always interesting to listen to, but he could not always resist the temptation of running into monologue. Some men are said to talk like a book ; one might say it not unfairly, for example, of Henry James : it was not so with Meredith, but, his style being natural to him, he could not talk otherwise, and therefore his utterance was not unlike the less elaborate passages of his prose. He was not exactly pontifical, but something too like a prophet for maintaining that equality with the company which the perfect talker must assume even if he feels it not. In a strict estimate, therefore, he must be reckoned with those who, as the chronicler says concerning some of David's mighty men, attained not to the first three. Yet, when I think of him out on the Surrey downs with the fellowship called the Sunday Tramps, I am half-minded to bid critical distinctions go hang and tell you that we took Meredith's talk just as it was, his and unlike any other man's, and delighted in it. After all he was a poet as well as a novelist, and who should be free to prophesy if poets are not ?

Meredith's novels, I suspect, have appreciative readers whom his verse does not touch. There is indeed a certain aloofness about it. He cannot claim a seat among the supreme council of masters

in Parnassus who compel homage even from the unwilling, save for a bare handful of rebels and outlaws. Tolstoy could in his gigantic perversity blaspheme both Shakespeare and Beethoven, and now nobody minds him, nor yet thinks the worse of his proper achievement for it. There are absurdities in Balzac also. With Meredith it is otherwise: a man may be reasonable, a lover of great poets, and yet not in tune with his song. But there are for most of us conjunctions of time and circumstance that stamp a particular admiration with a seal of certitude beyond argument. I heard Meredith read 'The day of the daughter of Hades' before it was in print. Such an experience puts one, with regard to any possible contradiction, in the mood of the missionaries whom the sainted Sankara Achárya, the great reviver of Brahman philosophy, sent forth to confute all manner of heretics. Those disciples fell in with a certain sect of materialists, and with them they argued not, but beat them with their slippers. Or, here at home, there is the quintessence of excommunication uttered by Lord Peter in the *Tale of a Tub*: God confound you eternally if you offer to believe otherwise. If 'The day of the daughter of Hades' is not great poetry . . .

Still I should like to be sure that Sir James Barrie does not differ. In the exquisite little vision he wrote, shortly after Meredith's funeral, of the artist saluted by his creations and welcomed, in renewed immortal vigour, by his fellows, there is no word of the verse. But for this there

is a complete justification : it could not be fitted into that picture. So I hope Sir James Barrie may be with me.

Whether poets in general are good talkers may be an idle question, or insoluble if it is reasonable. It may safely be said that their talk may be good without being poetical. Certainly Robert Browning was good company, and certainly no one who met him without knowing the fact would have suspected him of being a poet : he might have been a novelist of the realist kind, a traveller, or a magnate of the industrial world, in any of these ways familiar with men of letters and artists, but as a keen observer, not a fellow-worker. Certainly, likewise, his company was enjoyed by many who could or would make nothing of his verse, my parents among others.

Browning's talk was as different from Meredith's as could be. It was all downright and clear-cut, with no trace of obscurity. Both Browning and Meredith were often obscure in writing, but in wholly diverse ways. Browning drove his words like a capricious taskmaster, in a cramped and hustled crowd : Meredith drilled them like an ingenious ballet-master in fantastic groups and poses. When we are checked in Browning's work the difficulties are only in the expression, in Meredith's case they lie deep in the design. There is no trouble about the meaning when Browning writes : 'What porridge had John Keats?' : there is only the oddity of the word, not made less odd by the probability that Keats did eat porridge when he walked in Scotland. But

when we read in Meredith's 'Phoebus with Admetus':

God! of whom music  
And song and blood are pure—

there is a real difficulty of construction. That little 'of' can be grammatically read as a mere possessive, but so to read it would make mere commonplace. It is elusive, like an unusual abbreviation in a medieval MS., or rather like the *de* of popular, already half-medieval idiom with which the Silver Age poet of the *Pervigilium Veneris* (as in the company of good scholars I count him) wilfully plays. Once John Morley and I puzzled over the passage, thought we had settled it, then submitted our reading to Meredith himself, and found we were wrong. The true solution is that this 'of' stands for 'by virtue of.' Apollo is worshipped as the begetter of true art. But analytical comparison of Meredith's and Browning's manner is work for professed critics: I know not whether it has been done.

Thomas Hardy, not much like George Meredith in other respects, resembled him in being doubly eminent as a writer of both prose romance and verse. Our Victorian Age may safely challenge other periods of literature to show any two such authors flourishing at the same time. In one point Hardy has the advantage. You may like Hardy's poetry or not; you may call *The Dynasts* a splendid failure (as I do not) if you will, but you cannot deny its greatness. The same may be said of my friend Robert Bridges'

*Testament of Beauty*, which for some reason hard to explain found many more buyers if not more readers than *The Dynasts*. There is much talk of Hardy's pessimism : I can only say that I did not find enough of it in his conversation to make him at all a depressing companion. After all, every great tragedian, and Shakespeare at the head, must be written down a pessimist if that is a right name for all writers who face the tragic aspects of life. Certainly there was nothing doleful about our talk on the one occasion when I saw most of Hardy continuously. We cycled in pleasant summer weather from Dorchester to Portland to investigate a custom of the Island which had roused my professional curiosity. Land within its boundaries has from time immemorial been conveyed by 'church gift,' a formal declaration made in the parish church with good witness of the inhabitants, without anything being done on the land itself, and without aid of the sixteenth-century devices which elsewhere got round the ancient need of possession being delivered on the spot. Writing was added in the Restoration period to satisfy the requirement of the Statute of Frauds : except for this innovation the custom remained in use, and so far as I know continues to this day. It may be expressed in technical terms by saying that all the land in the Island is deemed to lie in the church. The validity of this ingenious fiction does not appear to have ever been disputed ; general convenience and perhaps a touch of local pride have combined, it seems, to keep it untouched. Hardy

and I, when we reached the Island, did not find any one on the spot who could give us information; but we obtained it within a short time, and we had thoroughly enjoyed the expedition.

My acquaintance and correspondence with Swinburne have already been incidentally mentioned. Like most of my contemporaries who had any taste for poetry, I was carried away in my youth by admiration for his work. Not that in the main I repent of it even if it was a little beyond measure; I am still of opinion that the best things in *Songs before Sunrise*, such as the stanzas on Dante and Michael Angelo in Part II of 'Teiresias' are unsurpassed in English verse. And surely a poet is entitled to be judged at his best, even though it might fairly be said to him concerning his later echoes of himself, as it was said to Rossini of his music, 'Vous vous écoutez trop.' An article I wrote on that volume never saw the light, for it frightened two editors, or I rather think three, and did not get beyond the stage of proof. One way or another I must have come to know Swinburne, but in fact my parents were brought into relation with him by common friendship with that veteran of letters Sir Henry Taylor. If I remember right, Sir Henry's son Aubrey, a scholar of great promise who unfortunately died young, had known Swinburne at Oxford. I have not any recollection of my parents meeting Swinburne face to face, but certainly there was some correspondence. Thus there was no need for me to introduce myself or seek an introduction. Once or twice my wife and I called on

Swinburne when he was living with Watts-Dunton at Putney. I have nothing to add to the pretty full published records of his person and habits. One thing that struck me was his extraordinary and ready familiarity not only with the greater writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but with the minor literature of the period. He showed me a pleasing aphorism in *Cupid's Whirligig*, a book of 1630: 'Man was made when Nature was but an apprentice; but Woman when she was a skilfull Mistress of her Arte.' I quoted this at the end of *The Etchingham Letters*, a joint work of miscellaneous notes strung together on the thread of a fictitious correspondence, written by Mrs. E. Fuller Maitland and myself. We did not aim at popularity and should have been content with the amusement the collaboration gave us, not to speak of the resulting and still continuing friendship. But it pleased a sufficient number of readers to attain a third edition and to be reprinted in America, and it is still alive to the extent of selling a few copies every year. Once or twice I was asked how Mrs. Fuller Maitland and myself had divided our work; the answer may be just worth setting down, though the method was simple enough. The persons of the imaginary correspondence being settled, we laid out a general plan and purposely left many details open. Mrs. Fuller Maitland wrote the women's parts and I wrote the men's, and we exchanged the letters in a natural manner as near as might be, throwing out questions and suggestions and inventing minor incidents without notice and



without knowing exactly what reply would come. Thus we always had more or less unexpected matter to keep us, and we hoped the reader, alert. At least one imitation rewarded us with that sincerest form of flattery, so we were entitled to think our hope had been fulfilled.

To return to Swinburne, I doubt whether the art of his prose is duly appreciated, for it is disguised at first sight by the multitude of words. From an immense wealth of vocabulary he poured out a truly Pantagruelic flood of epithets, inexhaustible alike in worship and vituperation, and seemingly unmeasured. But when you look at them a second time you perceive that the outpouring is not at random. The voice is loud, at times a boisterous and excessive shout, but by no means inarticulate; every word has its point. When Swinburne denounced Mrs. Beecher Stowe as a rampant Mænad of Massachusetts, I have no doubt that he had carefully considered by what kind of name a self-righteous woman exaggerating and rebuking sin would least like to be called. Again there is a felicity of more than alliteration in his title of 'finger-counters and figure-casters' for the pedantic school of Shakespeare critics, useful within due bounds, but intolerably pretentious and cocksure, who went about to solve all problems of date and authorship with tables of metrical statistics. As to the substance, I suppose all competent persons are agreed at this day that Swinburne was a very fine critic; he was liable to be carried away by affection or prejudice, to lose the sense of proportion and to

fall short of equity in judgment ; but even so it is hard to find him definitely praising anything bad or censuring anything good. His early essay on Blake, when one considers the disordered state of the materials at the time, is a masterpiece. Later and far more elaborate efforts to explain Blake have too often ended in *obscurum per obscurius*. Swinburne himself would have been the first to welcome some recent brilliant exceptions. I do not know whether my friend Dr. Helene Richter of Vienna, who knows William Blake down to the ground or rather up to the heavens, would agree to putting this piece of Swinburne's work so high ; but such is my general impression of it. Swinburne did not live to see Blake as nearly beatified as is possible in churches which have no regular process for that purpose. Blake's marvellous lyric known as ' Jerusalem,'<sup>1</sup> in Hubert Parry's perfect setting, has become an accepted hymn in these latter days ; I have heard it in Westminster Abbey. The congregation asks no questions about Blake's orthodoxy, and little suspects the lurking doctrine, which, as M. Saurat has shown, he derived from quite respectable antiquaries, that the origin of Abraham's ancestors was British. Those who maintain the contrary paradox that we are the lost Ten Tribes may settle it with Blake as they can.

Swinburne's mastery of Greek and Latin is known to all classical scholars. It is said that some presumably competent judges found inaccuracies in his handling of these tongues ; not

<sup>1</sup> In fact it is not from the book so called, but from the preface to *Milton*.

having found any myself, I wonder what they were. In any case, Gosse's report cannot be right in bringing Jowett into the story, for his verbal scholarship was notoriously far from exact. Once a *Saturday* reviewer remarked on some one's description of Jowett's *Thucydides* as classical: 'We do not deny that Dr. Jowett's *Thucydides* may be classical: with revision it may even become correct.' The manner is like Verrall's, but I don't know that Verrall ever wrote for the *Saturday Review*. However, it may have been with Swinburne in Greek as with my Cambridge friend Palmer, most brilliant and independent of our Orientalists, in Persian. Some European Orientalist thought he had found a mistake in a composition of Palmer's. Persian being happily a living language, a real Persian man of letters was consulted. 'Yes,' he answered, 'doubtless it is a liberty, but just such a liberty as a good Persian author might well take in that context.' So I seem to hear an echo of Attic laughter from some Elysian sanctuary of Apollo, Swinburne laughing with Aristophanes, and Landor of the company. For the rest, great rivers do carry down rubbish, as Callimachus said long ago. King George III spoke partial truth in his honest simplicity when he found much sad stuff in Shakespeare. But the sad stuff does not count. If perfection were the sole test, Hérédia's one casket of gems would outweigh the whole mass of Victor Hugo's gold and silver—and copper. Not that Swinburne ever wrought in copper; at worst he beat his gold and silver too thin.

Tennyson will hardly be remembered as a talker, but I find no better place to set down what I have to say of him. From my undergraduate days onwards I saw Tennyson many times, but so much has been published about him that I have little to add. One thing to which I can bear witness is that his outward brusqueness of manner, especially with strangers and chance acquaintances, was no more than a superficial effect of shyness; a shyness aggravated, if not caused, by near sight, as I have noted in other cases. A particular experience worth recording is that I heard him read 'Boadicea' not long after it was first published as an item in a handful of metrical experiments. The run of the verse, which is an English reflection or, as Tennyson himself said, echo, rather than an imitation of Catullus's 'Attis,' is difficult for merely English readers and not too obvious to Latinists. Tennyson's own way was to read slowly, giving every word its full value and letting the rhythm make itself heard without any artificial emphasis. Thus read, 'Boadicea' was effective and impressive. It would be too much to say that the poem as a whole is a great poem, but the few lines of prophecy are to my mind great poetry. Probably 'Boadicea' is little read nowadays, so I will quote them.

Fear not, isle of blowing woodlands, isle of silvery parapets!  
 Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering  
 enemy narrow thee,  
 Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the  
 mighty one yet!

Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be  
celebrated,  
Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimit-  
able,  
Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming  
Paradises,  
Thine the North and thine the South and thine the  
battle-thunder of God.

Scholars who know their Catullus will mark in the diminishing cadence of 'light and shadow illimitable' a felicitous transposition of the Galliambic movement. Yet 'Boadicea' is more than an echo of Catullus, for as a whole it is of a more robust and higher mood. This metrical felicity may be appreciated by comparison with Meredith's 'Phaethon,' an experiment of the same kind. Meredith's handling of the verse is only less masterly than Tennyson's by a hair's breadth perhaps, but that hair's breadth makes all the difference.

On the same occasion when I heard Tennyson read 'Boadicea' he lifted up his hand and smote a luckless reviewer: 'I saw *anapaest*, and I knew the man was a fool and a brute.' Note that his wrath against the people he once called the parasitic animalcules of the press was roused not by mere discordance of taste or opinion, but by ignorance that appeared beyond excuse, or by wilful malice. In this case the ignorance does not look so very gross on the face of it, but the context of the offending word may have made it so. In any case it is charity to remember that nothing is easier to talk nonsense about than prosody.

As for the silly depreciation of Tennyson which has been rather common of late years, it can be made to look plausible only by wilful neglect of the principle that every author is entitled to be judged by his best work. Any pert scribbler can pick out bad lines and even a downright bad piece or two from the writings of almost any great poet.

During the last thirty years or so of Queen Victoria's reign I was something of a journalist, though I never had much to do with the daily press. In those days it was thought highly imprudent for a young lawyer to be known to write anything not strictly professional. Happily the fashion of signed articles was then in its infancy, and no one was entitled to tell tales in public about the authorship of anonymous ones. The veil of anonymity was not quite opaque, but few solicitors were much in the world of letters. Whether the imprudence were more or less, I do not repent of it, for it not only kept me in touch with the humanities and enlarged my knowledge of men and things but brought in its train friendships of which I still treasure the memory. Moreover, I erred, if I did err, in good professional company. Fitzjames Stephen, until he became a judge, Bowen in his earlier days, and G. S. Venables, a leader of the Parliamentary Bar, were regular contributors to the old *Saturday Review*, of which indeed Venables was a pillar almost to the end of his life. Fitzjames Stephen also wrote much for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in its first period, and would have been a copious and powerful journalist if he had been nothing else.

Leading weekly papers, apart from the modern increase of signed articles and correspondence, were not very different from what they are now, though the *Spectator* alone has preserved a continuous identity and character. Serious evening dailies (of which the most notable were the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *St. James's Gazette* founded by Greenwood when he broke with the *Pall Mall*, and the *Westminster Gazette*) are now quite extinct: the chief reason, I suppose, being the decrease of leisure among lettered readers. The editors I knew were men of very different types and accomplishments. Hutton and Townsend of the *Spectator* were a pair who seemed oddly matched and yet ran well together: Hutton an amateur idealist in theology and philosophy, Townsend a brilliant but flighty Anglo-Indian publicist who had edited the *Pioneer* at Allahabad. Both had their fads, but there was nothing priggish about either. Hutton saw the merit of Samuel Butler's 'Psalm of Montreal,' a thing wholly out of his own line, and published it in the *Spectator*. In those days editors had time to talk to contributors at the office, and both Hutton and Townsend were good at talk in their diverse ways. Philip Harwood, of the *Saturday Review*, was an editor pure and simple. If he had any views or tastes of his own apart from the paper, nobody knew what they were, but he did his work thoroughly well. A peculiarity of the old *Saturday* was the complete separation of the business office from the editor's quarters. Any one who had asked for the editor of the *Saturday Review* at Mr.

Harwood's chambers at the Albany would have been met with a stare of blank ignorance, and any one who inquired for Mr. Philip Harwood at the office in Southampton Street would have been told that no such person was known there. Professor Saintsbury, my exact contemporary, was sub-editor, and so continued when the direction of the paper passed to my brother Walter. Hence a friendship in letters, notwithstanding divergent views in other things, which continued till we lost Saintsbury in 1933. He had lived to give his blessing to the revival of the *Saturday Review* in 1932.

One peculiar and amusing feature of the old *Saturday Review* was that it held an annual dinner at Greenwich, where the contributors met one another, the editor, and the owner (Beresford Hope) face to face. Greenwich fish dinners and the journeys to them by water in a specially chartered steamer are long since extinct, killed partly by the London world's lack of leisure and partly by London getting its fish from Grimsby. You must believe that there were such things and that we enjoyed them. One might meet unexpected company, as I found when I sat next Dr. Hayman, formerly head master of Rugby and consoled for his dismissal with a good living. Of his conduct at Rugby I had a decided opinion; but that was past history, he was a scholar of some merit, and we got on well enough without touching on anything controversial.

Two excellent editors were men as unlike as possible—John Morley, of the *Fortnightly Review*



and the *Pall Mall*, and Frederick Greenwood, who succeeded him in the direction of the *Pall Mall* and later founded the *St. James's Gazette*. (The several and surprising revolutions of the *Pall Mall* are matter for some historian of London journalism.) Morley, who lived to be a Viscount, a Secretary of State—and a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn, where I met him for the last time after all his adventures were done—was above all things a man of letters and of academic distinction, an honorary fellow of All Souls, and so forth. Journalism was really an episode in his life. Yet he was on the whole the best editor I ever had to do with. Greenwood was a wholly self-made man and in his life journalism was everything. But the Oxford scholar was a Radical of the Radicals and the self-made journalist a Tory of the Tories who sacrificed himself to his zeal by telling the world what a bad man, politically speaking, Mr. Gladstone was until the world was tired of it. Politically speaking, I say, for Greenwood, a strenuous combatant and a hard hitter in public, was incapable of personal malice; I doubt whether he ever had an enemy. He was a thoroughly good fellow, no less honest than 'honest John' as Morley was called, and more liked if not more respected. So much liked that W. T. Stead of all men came to the dinner that Greenwood's old associates gave him when he finally quitted public activity. Stead and Greenwood had been at daggers drawn as publicists, opposed in method and temper even more than in opinion; Greenwood had punctiliously observed the rules and

etiquette of honourable journalists. Stead had flouted them, and if Greenwood had not precisely spoken his mind of such conduct, every one knew it. But Stead came to that dinner, and it is the best thing I can tell of him. Sir James Barrie made a delightful speech about his own experience as a beginner under Greenwood's editorship; I fear there is no report of it. Doubtless our twentieth-century editors know their business as well as their predecessors; they may even have improved its workmanship. But I do doubt whether within the last forty years one could find a group of such men with such diverse talents doing the same kind of work in their own ways, and all so well.

Then there was James Knowles, the founder of the *Nineteenth Century*. He was quite unlike other editors. Indeed it might be more strictly correct to say that he was not an editor at all, but a literary showman. His peculiar gift was a discerning eye for the contributors whose names would make the most attractive contents list for the next few months; intrinsic merit counted, but not in the first line. Once he was quite frank about this when some one was surprised at seeing in the *Nineteenth Century* an article by an ambitious publicist whom judicious readers knew to be an impostor. 'Well,' said Knowles, 'if I keep a circus I can't do without a clown.'

A less successful exercise of selective tact was the adventure of the Metaphysical Society, started by Knowles with at most half an eye to business. A certain number of papers read at that Society's meetings did appear in the *Nineteenth Century*.

But also Knowles did believe in the simplest good faith that if a number of students of philosophy and natural science, representing every kind of school and opinion, could only be brought together to discuss the nature of things freely and at large on a neutral ground, the ultimate truth, or a sure clue to it, would somehow emerge. Such an expectation is of course—to use an Aristotelian phrase—exceedingly simple-minded in the eyes of any one who has attempted a serious study of philosophical questions, which Knowles had not. This attitude of innocent optimism is illustrated by the story current at the time (and I think not wholly fictitious) that Knowles invented the Metaphysical Society for the purpose of convincing Tennyson of the immortality of the soul. What Tennyson really wanted was not reasons but confidence in his own reasoning powers, and perhaps a clear notion of what he meant by immortality. Knowles, I suspect, was in the bond of the vulgar opinion that eternal life is an indefinitely continued existence in Greenwich time under improved conditions. Tennyson, I think, had begun to see deeper.

(Attentive readers of Dante can perceive, even without a commentary, that, whereas the mountain of Purgatory at the antipodes of Jerusalem is within the terrestrial sphere though raised above atmospheric accidents, the visions of Paradise in the several outer spheres up to the fixed stars are only symbolical, and Paradise itself, the assembly of the saints which Dante sees in the form of a celestial rose, is beyond all the spheres of Ptolemaic

astronomy and therefore independent of astronomical motion and not subject to the conditions of measurable space and time. If Tennyson had ever attended to this he might have been well pleased to have his rather hesitating conceptions cleared and fortified by Dante. But I know no reason for supposing that he did. Once I heard him express his idealism or, in his own term, 'higher pantheism' in a form perhaps nearer the root of the matter than sundry more elaborate statements: 'I think there must be a great Ego with all our little ego's swimming about in it.')

However, apart from the fundamental fallacy, Knowles's experiment of a Groves of Blarney kind of philosophical congress really never had a fair chance, for the Metaphysical Society was the oddest mixture of philosophers with persons otherwise more or less eminent who did not even know where metaphysics began, and did not understand the most elementary philosophical terms. Knowles assumed that all physicians were speculative biologists and all Cardinals learned theologians. Vigorous intellect is as compatible with total want of speculative interest as muscular activity with colour-blindness, or a literary sense of style with tone-deafness. A fashionable physician wholly unfamiliar with philosophy could be none the wiser for converse with a brilliant Catholic schoolman, and to a trained dialectician such as Father Dalgairns a scientist of, say, Sir William Gull's type, could signify nothing but one example more of invincible ignorance. Nevertheless there did happen interesting discussions and profitable

intercourse in the medley of incongruous elements. It was good anyhow to know James Martineau, and it was good for such men as Huxley and Fitzjames Stephen to meet. Dr. Martineau's family still possesses, I believe, the minute-book of the Metaphysical Society, a document of no small curiosity if only for the number and variety of the autographs it contains. One of them is Mr. Gladstone's.

The episode of the Metaphysical Society with its eccentric but not inglorious career leads me to remembrance of the philosophers whom I have personally known. Something has already been said of Henry Sidgwick and Henry Jackson, the leading captains of modern and ancient philosophy during my time of residence at Cambridge. Neither of them founded a school; Sidgwick was nothing if not anti-dogmatic, and Jackson's work was of the constructive critical kind which has no use for general formulas. But they did something much better; they taught younger men to seek for themselves, and to seek with an exacting conscience. Even if you consider philosophy merely as an intellectual game, there is no fun in playing with people (including yourself) who fudge their conclusions. In a later Cambridge generation there was McTaggart, assignable to no school, having no successor, and in his generation one of the two most companionable philosophers of my acquaintance. The other was William James. No two men could have gone to work more differently, or have brought out more curiously contrasted results, in which the points of agree-

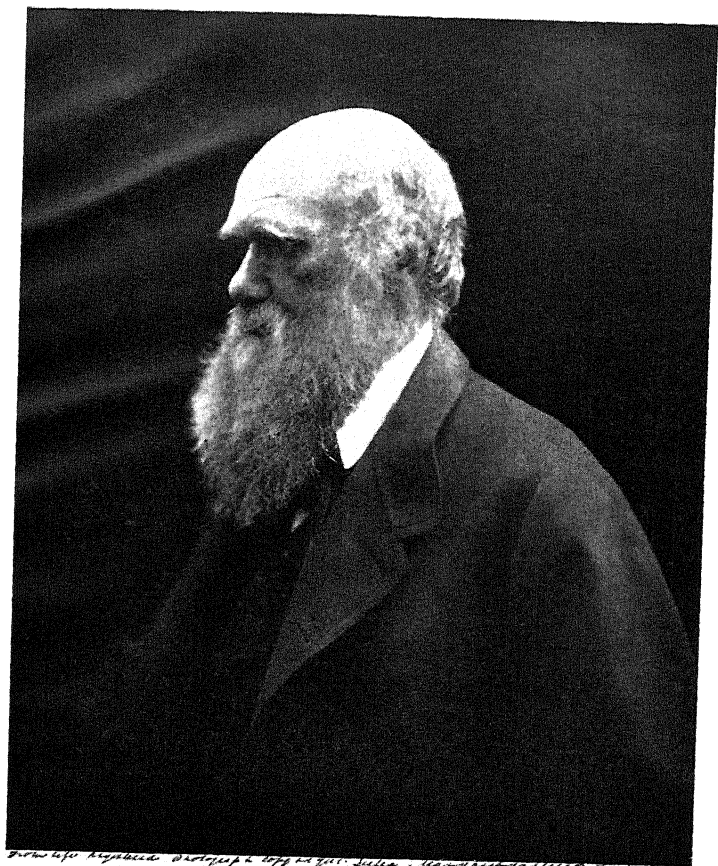
ment seemed only to heighten those of difference. Both were heretics in the original sense of the word (there is in the philosophy of this day no orthodox opinion to dissent from), but with a cheerful and genial independence wholly remote from fanatical zeal. I came to know William James in the best of all fashions, holiday travel, when your grandmother and I were making our way from canoeing in Canada to a camping party in the Adirondacks. We talked much of many things and little of Pragmatism (it was before he had definitely declared his point of view). In conversation he was quite as fascinating as his brother Henry the novelist, in a wholly different manner ; as a letter-writer I think he was even better (they are both in print and you may compare for yourself if you will).

Herbert Spencer, who figured largely in the speculative discussions of the latter nineteenth century, was certainly no metaphysician, but no less certainly he was a philosopher in the larger sense of our ancestors. For some time I knew him pretty well, but his life and work have been so fully set forth by himself and others that there is next to nothing to add. Only he stands at this moment, I think, a little lower than he will in your time, his ambitious failures having eclipsed his merits. The blind spots of his intellectual vision were excessive even for a self-educated and self-centred man, and, partly for want of training in the humanities, he was wholly uncritical in his use of authorities. Yet he had a real talent for generalizing and classifying, if only the materials

had always been sound; as Fletcher Moulton once put it in talk, he could put you up bookshelves but could not be trusted to put the right books on them. He deserves lasting credit for having accepted the evolution of organic life, as against the crude assumption of separately created kinds, before Darwin and Wallace had put the matter on a scientific footing. Likewise it was a valiant and opportune undertaking to exhibit the philosophy of the sciences, especially the social sciences, as a congruous whole capable of uniform exposition. The value of the results actually obtained is of secondary importance. Not even a much more critical and learned expounder could have produced at that time a systematic arrangement that would not call for much revision in due season. Remember, my grandson, that when Herbert Spencer first devoted himself to his life-long work the natural sciences, as yet untouched by the methods of exact science, were hardly more than heaps of roughly sorted empirical information.

For the man, one was not only bound to respect him for the risks he had taken in his disinterested search for truth; one could not help liking him, in spite of his oddities and touchiness, for his perfect openness and sincerity. He was the friend of Huxley (whom I name as the most eminent of many) and Huxley was a pretty good judge of men.

As concerning Huxley, he was an accomplished biologist who commenced philosopher, as they said in the eighteenth century, in necessary defence of Darwin and himself against attacks which now



*Portrait of Charles Darwin. Photographed by Julia Margaret Cameron. London. 1865.*

*I like this Photograph very much better  
Than any other which has been taken of me.*

*Ch. Darwin*

CHARLES DARWIN  
from a photograph by Julia Margaret Cameron  
[1860-1865 ?]





seem incredibly foolish. The assailants were for the most part grossly ignorant of the sciences, and in great part no less ignorant of philosophy. Wilberforce, the well-known Bishop of Oxford, made perhaps the most flagrant exhibition of arrogant and offensive incompetence. (Samuel Butler's eccentric championship of Lamarck against Darwin was folly too, but a clever piece of folly.) And so Huxley, having a clear head and the gift of lucid speech, embarked on the new seas of philosophy and the 'higher criticism,' and earned his master's certificate. Perhaps his oddest controversy was with Mr. Gladstone about the Gadarene swine. Now Gladstone was a great man, and about great men's lapses, unless they become dangerous deceptions, discreet silence is best. One can only wonder how Gladstone, in spite of being a fine scholar of the antique sort, wrote much worse nonsense about Homer. In justice to the Church it should be remembered that enlightened clergymen were to be found, notably Charles Kingsley. On another front Huxley was engaged in a minor but less confused fight. He had no more relish for anti-theological than for theological dogmatism, and none at all for the Comtist ambition of setting up a new religion of Humanity with Auguste Comte as its prophet and all the apparatus of ecclesiastical ceremonial and discipline, including a strict control of scientific research : in short, as Huxley put it in three words, Catholicism minus Christianity. There was and is a Positivist ritual (with differences between the extreme and the moderate party), but it has never made much

impression on outsiders. A man of the world who had attended the Church of Humanity and was asked what it was like reported thus : ' Very like any other church, you see Lord Houghton asleep there.' Now the founders of English Positivism were a band of Oxford scholars who in their discontent with the spiritual dryness of a still unreformed university had taken up with the first new prophet they met, somewhat as the girl in Heine's tragic ballad took up with ' den ersten besten Mann der ihr in den Weg gelaufen.' But scholars they were, and from the masters they despised they had learnt to express themselves with facility and in at least reasonably good English, whereas the prophet himself could never write decent French. And so, about sixty years ago, they made quite a fair show in the English reviews where things in general were discussed, and Huxley must have found it more amusing to give them a share of his hard knocks than to belabour wooden-headed archdeacons.

The best writer and scholar among the Positivists (not a rigorous and intransigent Comtist with bell, book and candle, such as Congreve) was Frederic Harrison. His tastes were by nature English and Conservative, historical rather than philosophical, and there was something incongruous about his alliance with a group of incorrigible pedants on behalf of the dullest and shallowest of all modern speculative systems. But he was a brilliant debater in print, most brilliant when maintaining a paradox, and with him in the field there was a quite pretty sporting controversy.

G. H. Lewes, an able and practised writer with a turn for philosophy which somehow never quite found itself, was already beyond the Positivist stage in which he produced his *History of Philosophy*, a profitable book in its day.<sup>1</sup>

There was no English Positivist of the calibre of Littré, whom Renan, as he once told me, thought in every way superior to Comte; in the point of language there is no possible doubt. (Renan meant to introduce me to Littré, but that great scholar's health was already failing and it could not be managed: later I knew our own greatest lexicographer since Dr. Johnson, Sir James Murray, and now and then bore a hand for him in the terms of my own profession.) Littré was, of course, an abomination to such extreme Comtists as Congreve; to know nothing of Positivism might be excusable ignorance, but to accept the philosophy and reject the political system of a commonwealth administered by a committee of bankers and ecclesiastically governed by the successors of the prophet was an unpardonable sin against the light.

Huxley the man of controversies was not the Huxley we knew at home. There his conversation was delightful; he was pleasant, versatile, full of experience, and with an abundant sense of humour, a blessing denied to many philosophers and notably to Herbert Spencer. Both Huxley and Darwin were the ancestors of worthy descendants, whose

<sup>1</sup> The second enlarged edition, in which the description of 'biographical' was dropped, is believed to be less good reading than the first.

accomplishments have been in part akin to their own, in part quite different.

John Tyndall, of whom there is still no complete account in any one book, was of Huxley's fellowship, and fighting in the same cause when he was not engaged in some particular contest, oftener than not in defence of some one whose work appeared to him not to have received its due honour. Tyndall, it must be remembered, was an Irishman and rather liked a fight for its own sake; yet I do not know of a single occasion when he fought for his own hand. Once he took sides, an unthinking spectator would have said, against his own party. A certain experimenter thought he had brought about the production of living from not living matter in a receptacle closed to the entry of germs from the outside. This, if established as a fact, would have been hailed as a triumph for the evolutionist school, and a great discomfiture for those who still held to the supposed scriptural doctrine of separate creations: not that it would have been evidence in favour of any particular doctrine of evolution. But science knows or ought to know nothing of parties. The question is whether there is satisfactory proof, not whether the thing alleged is what one would like to see proved. In this case Tyndall showed, to the satisfaction of every one but the experimenter, that the precautions had not been sufficient. When repeated with full security against the intrusion of foreign germs, the experiment failed. To put the result in plain English, the would-be demonstrator of spontaneous generation had not

really sealed up his phials : and, so far as I am aware, *omne animal ex ovo* is still, for the natural historian, a working rule without exception. But I am more competent to speak of Tyndall's mountaineering than of his physics. Twice I was with him in the Alps, at Zermatt, and as his guest at the Bell Alp, but my hopes of a serious expedition in his company were disappointed, the first time by bad weather, the second by a slight accident disabling him from real climbing for a while. However, he showed me the way up the Riffelhorn at Zermatt, and I can bear witness that he was a skilful and careful guide. As for Tyndall's solitary ascent of Monte Rosa, certainly it is not 'recommended for general adoption,' as the Alpine Guide says of dangerous or excessively laborious routes. But on that occasion it was justified by a singular conjunction of favouring circumstances : perfect weather, an experienced mountaineer in perfect condition, and the tracks of another party before him to warrant the soundness of the snow. (You shall understand, my grandson, that as a general rule of prudence a party crossing a snowfield where there may be hidden crevasses must not consist of less than three members ; it is a matter of unavoidable danger, for the best of leaders may fall into a crevasse, and one other man on the rope is not enough to pull him out.) Tyndall has described several other expeditions, and I remember no case of broken rules among them.

My friendship with Tyndall was no small part of my life from the beginning of years of discretion

till it was severed by his untimely death. It was hereditary, my parents having come to know him through the Royal Institution, where Tyndall was Faraday's successor and my father a member of the Board. To call Tyndall a genial man may seem a poor tribute, the word having been debased in common use until it may convey little more than the 'good fellow' which, without some emphasizing addition, is only one degree better than saying of a man that one knows no harm of him. Nevertheless 'genial,' in its full and uncorrupted meaning, is the one fitting word for the charm of character which endeared Tyndall to his friends. Such a character often goes with a quick temper and some lack of worldly prudence; Tyndall certainly had less of the serpent's wisdom than Huxley, and now and then was led into indiscretions which he would not have approved in cold blood. For the rest, they were of no importance. A certain exuberance in his written style is just Irishry, and so was his indifference to the danger of Englishmen taking the epithets too literally, or using the sense for their own quite different ends. He loved Hind Head for its solitude and spaciousness (qualities which had made Cobbett call it the most accursed spot that God ever made), but he did not reflect that to dilate in print on the beauties of an undeveloped site is to invite the speculative builder. One must go farther afield nowadays to find anything like what the Hind Head region was in Queen Victoria's days.

Tyndall's one considered adventure in the field of speculation, his address delivered to the British

Association at Belfast in 1874, raised a storm of blundering vituperation at home ; in Germany, where the tradition of humanist and cosmopolitan learning was still intact, it was welcomed as a noteworthy contribution to the philosophy of the natural sciences. I do not think he intended it to be controversial, still less materialist. Note that John Locke, admitted even by archdeacons to be a quite respectable author, had said that he saw no reason why God should not make matter think if he chose, although there was no evidence of it.

Michael Faraday, whom Tyndall revered and commemorated as his master, was also a friend of my parents. I still remember the charm of his lectures given for the special benefit of children at the Royal Institution—I was of the juvenile audience in the days of the Crimean War. Tyndall was a worthy successor and an admirable expounder, but I have known only one man who had Faraday's gift of making things quite clear, as if it was only an ordinary talk, without any sign of effort. That one was my contemporary and intimate friend W. K. Clifford, of whom I said long ago what I could say. None of us, young or old, could guess during Faraday's life or indeed for many years after that his discovery of magneto-electricity would go far to change the face of the civilized world not only in its direct applications on a large scale but in all kinds of auxiliary services. Every driver of a motor vehicle is Faraday's debtor. In my parents' house we heard nothing of these weighty matters ; Faraday was



just a delightfully simple and sympathetic elder. Some ten years after I heard my first lecture at the Royal Institution a new table game was in fashion, called by the mysterious name of Squails: the game and its terms were invented, it was said, by a family of children. But whoever settled the rules must have been familiar with bowls or curling or both; the game may be classed as an adaptation of bowls to a drawing-room table, related to its outdoor original as shove-halfpenny, formerly shove-groat (which however seems to have come first) to shovel-board. Instead of a bowling green, a smooth table, which should be round (you will remember that the round table was a regular piece of Victorian furniture). For bowls, polished wooden discs about the size of the old silver crown; the 'squail' was placed on the edge of the table with a fraction of it overlapping, and driven by a clean stroke with the flat of the hand towards the jack (called by a fancy name) which was a cylindrical piece of metal like a miniature pill-box: this was placed in the centre, but was generally much displaced in the course of play. Scoring exactly as at bowls, with the like incidents of helping your own partner and hampering the opponent who was to follow. (An archæologist might suggest that squails were actually evolved from shove-groat, but the facts will not allow it.) Now it happened somehow that in my parents' drawing-room we wanted to play squails on a table that was not round; rather a knotty problem. Faraday came to the rescue by devising a kind of cardboard outrigger to fit the edge

of the table, whereby the squail could, notwithstanding the want of a natural radius, be truly struck towards the jack. Since my youth I have not seen or heard anything of this game: it depended on the Victorian round table, and must have disappeared with it. The rules ought to be extant in the contemporary handbooks of indoor games, or to be found with such specimens of the apparatus itself as may lurk in the cupboards of country houses. Thus Faraday had, besides the great gift of teaching children, the greater one of becoming a child in his leisure time.

I am tempted to add a word about the well-meant efforts of lesser men than Faraday and Tyndall to interest young people in the natural sciences. They were apt to assume that popular instruction can be made attractive only by making it sloppy; whereas the more popular it is, the more it is bound to be rigorously accurate so far as it goes, for it is addressed to those who cannot supply the necessary qualifications themselves. One real howler in a book of some repute at the time has stuck in my memory. Young pupils, supposed to have made some advance in applied mathematics, are looking at fireworks, and one of them shows off his learning by exclaiming 'Look! the rocket as it ascends describes a parabola.' A shocking piece of sloppiness, that being just what a self-propelled projectile, under continuing acceleration while the power lasts, cannot do, besides which the resistance of the air is neglected. Certainly that instructor would have made his pupils very bad gunners. But I fear the taste for sloppi-

ness is common and inveterate, and not in the exact or the natural sciences alone.

My interest in speculative philosophy and consequent acquaintance with philosophers began at Cambridge. There is nothing there corresponding to the philosophical course of Oxford Greats, but we did read Plato, and Thompson, when he was still Professor of Greek and a canon of Ely, gave excellent lectures on Plato's *Republic*. Long afterwards an Oxford colleague of Corpus found some profit in my notes thereof. That was a sufficient start for any one with a philosophical turn of mind, and I had no small encouragement and help from Henry Sidgwick. Soon after taking my degree I was attracted to Spinoza; whence the first hint came I am not sure—perhaps from G. H. Lewes's *History of Philosophy*. There was a day when I looked into the *Tractatus Theologico-politicus* in the University library, and perceived that here was something worth serious pursuit, and never yet adequately pursued in England. As I went on, I found underlying the superficially dogmatic form an essentially modern and scientific method, and I took courage to express the opinion I had formed. So it was that when the year 1877 brought the bicentenary of Spinoza's death, and a cosmopolitan movement for commemorating it, I became the corresponding secretary of the English committee. In that capacity I introduced myself to Renan. His reception was cordial, and before long we were friends. This alone was a rich and ample reward for such pains as I was taking in the matter. A short time afterwards I spent some

weeks in Holland, partly on the business of the commemoration (its completion was delayed by accidents till 1880), partly in verifying and enlarging the materials for my own projected work. There too I made new friends, especially Professor Land, of Leyden, a sound and accomplished scholar and mighty good company, too little known beyond his own country. We still had to fight misconceptions from different and indeed opposite quarters. There were Hegelians who, not being able to bring Spinoza into the historical stream leading to the consummation of all philosophy in the ocean of Hegel, decided that Spinoza must be relegated to a backwater, and officially labelled him as an eccentric Cartesian. Also there was a group at the other extreme, Dutch with one or two French allies, who tried to make out that Spinoza's position was for all practical purposes materialist: a paradox that could be made to appear arguable only by ignoring whole chapters of Spinoza's own exposition. These controversies are extinct, Spinoza stands where he ought, and there is an active and flourishing Spinoza Society with its headquarters at The Hague, which celebrated the tercentenary of his birth in 1932. Incidentally my work brought me into touch with divers English philosophers whom otherwise I might not have known, or not so well: not counting Arthur Balfour, for our acquaintance dated from Cambridge and, though our intercourse was discontinuous, it was never long interrupted.

I do not know that I should much care to be a philosopher by profession, but being an amateur

in philosophy, besides the exercise and amusement of intellectual athletics, brings with it considerable opportunities of enlarging one's human interests. Moreover it increases one's power of appreciating different opinions and points of view not only in philosophy but in other matters. And if one is asked what is the good of metaphysics if they lead to no generally received conclusions, it may be answered that we all use metaphysical conceptions whether we know it or not, that much popular science and theology (including anti-religious dogmatism) is really bad metaphysics, and that philosophical discipline enables us to detect that kind of nonsense when we see it. But we may answer still more shortly: Well, we who philosophize like it, and at least it does you no harm.

By way of postscript to this chapter, I may explain my silence about two eminent Victorian writers who were among my father's friends, Dickens and Thackeray. I can barely say that in my early youth I shook hands with them, Thackeray at the second great exhibition in London, Dickens some years later, and that was all. *Vidit tantum*. I have lived to enjoy the friendship of their descendants, but that is not a matter to speak of in public.

*Note to p. 66.*—An eminent and scholarly correspondent, having seen part of this chapter extracted in the *Quarterly Review*, called my attention to Dickens's opinion in 'Our Bore,' a short paper to be found near the end of his collected works, that bores enjoy one another's company. It would be rash to dispute Dickens's observation, but it concerns only one class of bores, the omniscient anecdote-mongers, nowadays, I think, less frequent.



*Bassano.*

SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK  
about 1900



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CHAPTER IV  
THE LIBERAL ARTS

§ I. MUSIC

**I**N the amenities of life common tastes and æsthetic sympathy count for much, but for the most part they are secondary to more pressing interests. People who differ about many things have to work together in others, whether aware or not aware wherein and how far they differ (they may, on the other hand, be pleasantly surprised by discovering unsuspected points of sympathy). Even when they know their differences they can live together, be intimate friends, even lovers. There is no need for husband and wife both to like or both to dislike olives or oysters or detective stories. Conflicting opinions about the pronunciation of Latin are no bar to the friendship of scholars. I do not speak here of contrasts obviously going beyond questions of taste or expert opinion, and affecting the conduct of life, such as differences of culture and religion; but even those are not insuperable. The Vatican discourages mixed marriages but has to tolerate them. Again, one of a married pair may be musical, the other simply indifferent to music. But here we seem to find something peculiar to music among the objects



of preference. Are positively conflicting musical tastes compatible with domestic harmony? Can a Wagnerian wife be happy with an anti-Wagnerian—not merely unmusical—husband? I doubt it.

In any case concordant feeling about music appears to be a more potent bond than other kinds of æsthetic agreement. There is both pleasure and profit in looking at pictures or sculpture with a companion who knows as much of them as oneself, or more. But in listening to great music with congenial hearers—it may be one or several, or on special occasions the whole audience—there is a delight which goes deeper, a conscious partnership in something beyond all temporal accidents. Of course, any one who likes may say that amusement of whatever kind is more amusing in company, and there is nothing more in going together to a concert than in going together to the play. The contrary cannot be proved. If it be moonshine to ascribe a singular spiritual virtue to music, I am content to be a man in the moon with Robert Browning.

The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know.

So said Browning in the name of Abt Vogler; my friend Richard Jebb, of whom I have already said something, himself not unversed in music, wrote a wonderful version of that great poem in Pindaric Greek, one of those rare translations which not only represent but interpret and

illuminate the original. With this line he was singularly felicitous :

*σκοπεῖθ', ἄτεροι φαρὲν ἐπίστασθαι μελωδοί.*

For those to whom this feeling is familiar it becomes, whether they have any proper skill in music or not, a part of their life to a degree which the enjoyment of no other art can attain ; and among like-minded friends it makes no small point of friendship. On occasion it may go farther. It would not be strictly true to tell you that I fell in love with your grandmother at the Beethoven Festival at Bonn in 1871, but I verily believe that Beethoven had something to do with it.

Likewise my parents' regard for James Spedding was enhanced by their unanimous admiration of Jenny Lind's singing, whereas the coldness of another friend on that point of faith almost led to an estrangement. I can just swear to having heard that voice, but only in the Bach Choir, of which Mrs. Goldschmidt was an assiduous member long after she left the stage and married. Not that music runs in our family. My parents liked the opera and dramatic singing, and paid homage to Handel's 'Messiah,' more especially when Sims Reeves was the tenor and actually sang, as to which there was a constant element of doubt until the last moment. He preserved his voice for an extraordinary length of time by nursing it with extreme care and strictly refusing to force it when it was not in perfect condition. There lurks in a law report unknown to the lay people a programme of a concert in which, after the names of

the other intended performers, there comes 'including Mr. Sims Reeves, God's will permitting.'<sup>1</sup> On the whole I think Sims Reeves was justified. Occasional disappointment of an audience was for the gain of a younger generation who otherwise would never have heard him. To return to my parents, they cared little for an orchestra without voices, and chamber music frankly bored them, as it did and probably still does many opera-goers. I have heard the string quartet contemptuously dismissed as four damned fiddlers in black. But somehow I was attracted to the Monday Popular Concerts when I left Cambridge, and had my reward for attending them in more ways than one. In those days impecunious devotees made their way up a crooked back staircase to the orchestra seats of St. James's Hall and were content to wait an hour or so, though not all of them were young. Once I was next an elderly man who himself played the fiddle: he politely asked me to shift a little to give him a better view, our seats being quite near the performers. 'I want to see Joachim's fingering,' said he. That was real devotion to art; I trust the like of it is not extinct. Little did I think then that I should be honoured by Joachim's friendship and able to be of some use to him and his companions; of which a word later. (These notes were set down before, though not long before, my recollec-

<sup>1</sup> *Taylor v. Caldwell* (1863) 3 B. & S., 826, 830. That concert did not take place; the hall was burnt down, and the ensuing lawsuit between the owner of the building and the concert producers became a leading case.

tion was confirmed, with some further detail, by communications to the Press from Sir Henry Hadow and others whose memory goes as far back as mine).<sup>1</sup>

It must be hard nowadays for young people to conceive how poorly London was provided in those days with good music accessible to the general public. Outside the opera there was only one permanent orchestra in London, the Philharmonic Society's, and that was languishing for want of an efficient conductor. Once Dvořák came over to conduct a piece of his own, and then the orchestra woke up and showed what it could do when the first fiddle was not practically left to take charge. August Mann's concerts at the Crystal Palace were excellent, but they were given only on Saturday afternoons; and though he could do much, he could not convert a section of the Crystal Palace into a satisfactory music-room. On that score, indeed, there was nothing to complain of, in the old St. James's Hall. By some fortunate accident (for architects then knew nothing of acoustics) one heard in it so well that it was not too large for chamber music. But, except for the winter season of Joachim's quartet, its capacities were nothing like adequately used. There was a cult of oratorio, limited to Handel's principal works with the addition of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah'; but it was a thing apart; good so far as it went, and useful in maintaining the standard of technical competence. As for Wagner, only professed musicians knew that there was such a

<sup>1</sup> See *The Times*, March 16 and 18, 1932.

person, and what they professed to know was mostly wrong.

It was a pure accident that revealed Wagner to me. In the summer of 1868 I spent some weeks at Dresden with a Cambridge party of my friends, nominally a reading party. I do not remember what their studies were supposed to be, or who directed them. Cambridge reading parties were apt to be slack, for the simple reason that candidates for the Triposes who seriously meant business found it better to do their long vacation work at Cambridge; and their accustomed 'vacation term,' free from college lectures and routine, was a very pleasant time. But that is not to the present purpose. We did all want to improve our German, and, besides taking lessons from a good master and gradually becoming more or less able to talk with the good lady of our boarding-house, followed the classical method of attending the theatre. The Dresden stage was then in the front rank with Berlin and Vienna. One thaler of the North German standard (equal to three marks of the later currency) was the price of the best seats. The performances began at seven, and in the case of a long play such as 'Faust,' at six. 'Faust,' by the way, excellently acted and of course without cuts, made such an impression on us that we walked home to our good Fräulein Kretschmer's house without saying a word. One evening the opera was 'Lohengrin,' of which and of Wagner we knew absolutely nothing. The Lohengrin was Tischatschek (presumably of Bohemian origin), already old, but with a voice that he still preserved

with care and success comparable to Sims Reeves's, a quarter of a century after he sang in the first performance of 'Rienzi,' and moreover an accomplished actor. Elsa was a star from another theatre, appearing 'als Gast,' a certain Fräulein Mahlknecht. I wonder if any one remembers those names now, beyond the circle of specialists in musical history. We came away devout Wagnerians, in an elementary stage no doubt, but you must remember that the Bayreuth theatre was not yet built nor the 'Ring' performed nor 'Parsifal' published, and the wedding march had not become hackneyed.

Many years later I saw 'Lohengrin' in London with Nilsson as Elsa and Tietjens as Ortrud. An unexpected effect was that Tietjens, with her superb dramatic faculty, made Ortrud interesting and more than interesting. Usually the second act, which may be said to consist of Ortrud and Telramund conspiring on a doorstep in the dark, is rather tedious. Tietjens made it eclipse the first, and almost made one sympathize with Ortrud. Of course this upset the dramatic proportions of the action, but if it was wrong it was magnificent. The Lohengrin, I suppose, was meritorious but not in anything like the rank of Tietjens and Nilsson, for I forget all about him. I have seen other good performances of 'Lohengrin' in London, but this was unique.

The two most perfect musical artists I have known were Pauline Viardot and Joachim, whose acquaintance I made within the space of a year or two. Both were consummate in execution,

but were real musicians and not mere executants. Both were accomplished beyond the limits of their own particular art, and were excellent company in general conversation. Joachim spoke English quite well, and Madame Viardot was at home in several languages, as was her elder sister, Madame Malibran. Here I must allow myself to quote a passage from E. Legouvé's *Soixante ans de Souvenirs*, Paris, 1886, i. 252, perhaps the earliest record of Mme Viardot. Legouvé and Malibran were friends; they had stopped for a talk in the street on a casual meeting:

Passe une voiture, et à la portière de cette voiture, se précipite une tête de petite fille, qui lui envoie mille baisers :

— 'Qui est cette enfant ? lui dis-je.

— Cette enfant—c'est quelqu'un qui nous éclipsera tous, c'est ma petite sœur Pauline.'

Cette petite sœur est devenue Mme Viardot.

Both Pauline Viardot and Joachim had that rare virtue, a high and inflexible artistic conscience, and neither of them was capable of self-advertisement. Leonard Borwick, whose career as a pianist was all too short, had the same virtue : I wish I had known him well enough to speak adequately of him. Your great-grandmother and I kept up our friendship with Madame Viardot during the rest of her life and saw her several times in Paris. It began in this wise. In 1871 the ill wind of the Paris Commune blew good to England in the form of an exodus of persons more or less distinguished in many ways, from the company of the Théâtre Français (of whom I will tell

you farther on) to artists and men of letters who had either taken some part in the Commune's short-lived government of Paris or were suspected of being too friendly with the leaders of the rebellion. There were also voluntary exiles who, without being in personal danger, found London more peaceful and agreeable than Paris, and of these were the Viardots and their constant companion, Turgenev. In the course of the summer they gave several musical parties, at one of which we met Gounod. The chief thing I remember about him is that he was a good amateur singer. Later in the same year, in the summer vacation, I saw the Viardots and Turgenev more at ease in their villa at Baden-Baden. We had a delightful evening of mixed music and frivolity: the frivolity was a game of Consequences (whether now extinct I know not) in which sentences written in a set form by each of the company were dismembered and shuffled, making nonsense combinations which might or might not have some absurd point. The amusement was increased by the fragments being in three languages. That same day I had a talk with Turgenev, whose English was excellent: many years later I became able to appreciate some of his works in the original; then he was for me just a venerable and charming patriarch who did not say anything memorable but was extremely courteous to an unknown young Englishman.

My acquaintance with Manoel Garcia, Pauline Viardot's brother, who inherited and continued an unsurpassed mastery in the teaching of vocal music, was slight, but I once heard him express a strong



opinion about modern musical experiments. It was after a concert including some composition then recent, I think of Tchaïkovsky's ; I suppose it would excite no particular attention now. What Garcia said of it was : ' C'est là peut-être la musique de l'avenir, mais ce sera pour les damnés.' It is beyond my competence to judge whether he was really on the side of the angels. In any case the latest Russian music, say Stravinsky's, would be an appropriate purgatorial discipline for old-fashioned composers.

The continuous revival in England of orchestral music supported by audiences who could appreciate good conducting may be dated from Hans Richter's visit to London (the first of many) in 1880, when he produced the whole series of Beethoven's symphonies at St. James's Hall. In later years we met him at Bayreuth also. Like all first-rate conductors, he was a considerable musician. Technically he did not count as a pianist (his particular instrument was the trumpet), but he could sit down to a piano and give a better than technical rendering of a symphony. Since those days we have had visits of other eminent conductors—notably Lamoureux of Paris in 1896—and produced some of our own, but Richter was the pioneer. Improvement has gone on at an increasing rate, and I suppose London is now as well provided with orchestral music as any city in the world ; last, not least, the Broadcasting Corporation has made it a centre of distribution for both the older and the newer composers. At my age I confess that there is much of the new

music—especially the Russian school—which I tolerate only for the sake of the old. For us ancient folk Beethoven is still supreme. The other day, after a course of his symphonies, there came to me in a sort of day-dream a fancy which I set down as a note at the end of this section. You, my grandson, being half Gascon, will understand by nature why it came in French and would not have done at all in English. In French, perhaps in other Latin tongues too, those who really believe in their saints can play and jest with them as the writers of Latin freely did in the Middle Ages. The rubric for such things is *miracula jocosa*. You may find a few of them in Grimm's tales, but on the whole they do not come kindly to a northern mouth; Pantagruel is their right patron; or, if any man would have Scripture warrant, David dancing before the ark, who is a standing puzzle and scandal to Puritans. Even as late as the Renaissance there was at least one jocular saint, St. Philip Neri. Let my little *miraculum jocosum* amuse you, and maybe a few honest Pantagruelists who also love music and worship Beethoven, as best it may.

In those days of musical expansion your grandmother and I made several expeditions to Bayreuth; the first was in 1886. It was still quite a small country town, on which the Wagnerian pilgrims were quartered without crowding by the remarkably efficient arrangements of a local committee. Our baggage was transported to the lodgings assigned us by an old woman with a hand-barrow: *Schiebkarre*, shove-cart, is the

expressive German term. Our children were still too young for travel ; later pilgrimages were made with them and other young friends, once or twice a fairly large party, and included visits to Munich, where Mozart's operas received full justice, as I trust they still do and will so continue in your time, by performance on the stage of the Residenz theatre, a stage just of the right size. On a grand opera stage, with the spoken dialogue turned into recitative, their comic spirit is falsified. But to return to Wagner.

In those early days the perfect Wagnerites were a little too sweeping in their panegyrics on the Bayreuth theatre. They were justified so far as concerned its architectural fitness and convenience, and the excellence of the musical direction. As to stage decoration, mounting and management it was not then the fact that the theatrical world had much to learn from Bayreuth. On the contrary there were obvious shortcomings in the early performances. The first time we saw ' Parsifal ' the wicked enchanter's garden had no touch of magic about it. Rather it was a crude overgrown Covent Garden of giant flowers that shocked the eye with nondescript form and garish colouring. As for Klingsor's flower-maidens they were not even up to the mark of average ballet dancers. Persons and motions alike were so much calculated to repel any adventurer of ordinary vice that there did not appear to be anything heroic in Parsifal's virtue. Then the trick of doing transformations behind a screen of steam, supposed to be a notable invention, was too often worked in

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a fashion that any common pantomime manager would have turned down as amateurish. But all these infantile weaknesses have long since been outgrown.

Again, it is certainly not true that Wagner's operas, with the possible exception of 'Parsifal,' can be properly produced only at Bayreuth. I have seen the Ring quite well given in London and the 'Meistersinger' excellently, not to speak of 'Götterdämmerung' at Vienna some thirty years ago. The Munich performances, which it has never come in my way to see, have likewise a great reputation.

Now the acts of Van Rooy, Scheidemantel, Van Dyck, and the De Reszkes, and of Malten and Sucher and Ternina, and all that they sang, surely they are long since written in the proper chronicles by those that have skill in music, and I hold my peace concerning them lest I should speak foolishness.

Now let me return to English matters.

In the latter days of Joachim's work in England the relations of the quartet with the firm who had for many years been their managers became unsatisfactory, and in 1900 a body of guarantors was formed under the name of the Joachim Quartet Concerts, afterwards the Joachim Concerts Committee, to take over the enterprise. It came into action in 1901, and continued for several years with complete success. The survivors of the first executive committee include my friend Mr. Edward Speyer (who was the specially active founder), Mr. Douglas Freshfield, and myself;

Alma Tadema's name stood at the head. Later Mr. Hugh Godley, now Lord Kilbracken, Lord Monteagle (the present), and Sir Herbert Thompson joined us ; later still, after Joachim's quartet ceased to be heard here, and the name was changed to the Classical Concerts Committee, Mr. Rowe, now the Under-Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn and still active in the cause of good music.

There is a seeming paradox about the functions of a committee of guarantors. In this, as in every kind of suretyship, a real and substantial responsibility is undertaken as being the necessary means of obtaining credit for some purpose in which the undertaker is interested. In almost every case the surety hopes with more or less confidence that he may not be called upon. But in the case of a common enterprise backed by guarantees the confidence has to amount to something like an act of faith : for an actual calling up of the sums guaranteed or any considerable part of them would signify the failure of the enterprise. Now and then it may be profitable to compare small things with great, and I am tempted to remark that the situation of such guarantors is not wholly unlike that of the constituent Powers in the League of Nations. The resemblance might suffice to give pause (if they could or would pause to think of anything) to the truculent pacifists who clamour against the Council of the League for being patient in well doing. Seemingly these people would like the Council to risk a new world war and the destruction of all the work done for peace whenever its advice is not immediately

accepted by the parties concerned. Let this digression be excused.

In our case the plan was quite successful. Joachim's quartet continued to play regularly in London till 1906, within a year of his death, and the Classical Concerts Committee was active till 1912. It was finally wound up some years after the War, and a small balance remaining in its hands was applied—alas! for the purpose being necessary—to the benefit of Joachim's family. Twice the Committee took the lead in rendering special honours to Joachim. In 1904 he celebrated the diamond jubilee of his first appearance in England in 1844. On the 16th of May a reception followed by a concert was held in Queen's Hall. An address written by myself was read by Hubert Parry, and then, together with a portrait of Joachim by Sargent, presented to Joachim by Arthur Balfour. The musician himself took an active part in the concert as both soloist and conductor. My friend Robert Bridges contributed a sonnet which may be seen in his *Poetical Works* (ed. 1914, p. 377).

The address was printed with the programme but not otherwise published, so I reproduce it as an appendix: I took some pains about it and understood that Joachim was pleased with it.

Then, in 1908, Joachim having died in August 1907, a memorial concert was given in London under the direction of the Committee (Jan. 23). Dr. Allen, of Oxford, conducted, Lady Hallé was the violinist—the most fitting for the occasion, for she had constantly played with Joachim—

and Dr. Tovey contributed a short but very instructive estimate of Joachim as an original musician. It may be that in your time, when his execution is only a recorded memory, his musical genius will be more fully appreciated.

More than a score of years later I was again in company with my old colleague, Mr. Rowe, in honouring Joachim's centenary at Lincoln's Inn, of which I will tell you when I come to speak of the Inns of Court.

## NOTE 1

## L'APOTHÉOSE DE BEETHOVEN

Dans la salle de conseil de l'Académie de Musique qui donne sur la grande cour d'honneur, les maîtres bienheureux rédigeaient le protocole de la réception de Beethoven au Paradis. La tâche n'était pas trop facile. Pour les modernes, point de doutes, attendu qu'on ne se jalouse plus dans le royaume des cieux. Pour les anciens, Jubal, Orphée et d'autres puisaient comme de droit. Mais Pindare, bien que poète de son état, réclama sa place comme directeur des chœurs de ses odes : ce qui fut accordé. Ensuite il n'était que logique d'inviter aussi Saphô, Corinne, les dramaturges attiques ; mais tout cela demandait un peu de réflexion. Enfin Sébastien Bach, serein et rayonnant, tenait à la main l'ordre du jour définitif qui n'attendait que le parafe du directeur général. Asaph prenait déjà la plume.

Mais on entend la rumeur d'une théorie superbe et insolite qui déborde dans la cour. C'est la prise d'armes des tambours réunis de la musique céleste, jusqu'aux grosses caisses et timbaler inclusivement. Et de leur batterie s'élève une harmonie immense qui, comme un tonnerre délicieux, retentit partout dans la voute de la sphère de cristal : des coups éclatants, des roulements, des floritures, des cadences en pianissime, et encore la reprise de coups d'une sonorité

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jusque-là inouïe même dans les orchestres du Paradis. Au milieu Beethoven lui-même, porté en triomphe, dirige.

Voici comment la chose se fut passée. A la première annonce de l'arrivée de Beethoven, tous ces tambours, hommes et séraphins, s'élancèrent sur la porte d'entrée dans la volonté impérieuse de faire honneur au maître qui fut le premier pour comprendre toute la valeur de leur instrument. St. Pierre, en portier fidèle, insistait sur sa consigne qui était d'attendre des ordres supérieurs, mais sa voix s'étouffa sous un roulement fulgurant et joyeux. Les tambours, s'écriant : Il est à nous ! entraînèrent Beethoven à la cour d'honneur. Alors les maîtres bienheureux, Mozart en tête, descendirent en faisant cascade sur le grand escalier de l'Académie pour s'unir aux tambours, et le cortège, toujours sonnant, se mit en marche vers la salle des réceptions.

— Mon cher Asaph, dit le roi David, ces garçons t'ont rudement bousculé ton petit protocole, n'est-ce pas ?

— Sire, dit Asaph, je ne leur donne pas tort.

— Ces checs petits tambours ! ajouta en riant Ste-Cécile, qui venait, par un mouvement également imprévu, d'embrasser Beethoven devant toute là hiérarchie céleste.

C'est ainsi que Beethoven fit son entrée au Paradis en vainqueur, drapeaux au vent et tambour battant.

### NOTE 2

#### ADDRESS TO JOSEPH JOACHIM, MAY 16, 1904

At a time known only by hearsay to most of us, you first brought before an English audience the promise of that performance which has been eminent among two generations of men ; which, in gaining an unrivalled wealth of experience, has had no loss to count but that of novelty ; which we still welcome as a continuing delight, and which will remain for many generations more as a tradition and example to be prized by those who are born too late for the happiness of immediate knowledge. It was under the auspices of Mendelssohn that you played Beethoven's Violin Concerto at the Philharmonic Society's concert on May 27, 1844. No com-



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bination could have been more prophetic of your career, though neither its duration in time nor the singular quality of its achievement was then within any probable foresight.

At that day the fine arts, and music among them, languished in this country. It was not understood that the function of art is to be not merely the recreation of a privileged class, but an integral element of national life. We have now learnt to know and to do better. Opportunities of becoming acquainted with the music of the great masters have been multiplied tenfold, and the general competence of both execution and criticism has been raised beyond comparison. This great and salutary change which we have witnessed in the course of the last generation is largely due to your exertions. Learning from Mendelssohn and Schumann, and working with Brahms in the comradeship of lifelong friends, you have devoted your whole energies, as executant and as composer, to continuing the tradition and maintaining the ideal of classical music.

We now hold it fitting that the sixtieth anniversary of your first appearance here should not pass without a special greeting. The welcome we offer you is alike for the artist who commands every power of the trained hand, and for the musician whose consummate knowledge and profound reverence for his art have uniformly guided his execution in the path of the sincerest interpretation. Your first thoughts as a performer have ever been for the composer and not for yourself. In no hour have you yielded to the temptation of mere personal display, and the weight of your precepts in one of the greatest musical schools of Europe is augmented by the absolute fidelity with which your example illustrates them.

The present occasion will, we hope, be memorable of itself. None the less, we desired that you should possess a visible record of it. Mr. Sargent has brought us the willing and generous aid of a sister art, and we have the pleasure of presenting to you the portrait of yourself, which he has employed no common zeal to complete within the time at his disposal.

As the names of Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms link you in a special manner with the great masters of the past,

## THE STAGE

this concert includes some of their work. We rejoice that it is your pleasure to take an active part which will enhance for both performers and hearers the significance of this commemoration.

### § II. THE STAGE

My acquaintance with the stage, unlike my attachment to classical music, is hereditary. I should be a born playgoer if such a thing were possible. My mother was a devoted one from her early youth ; my father became her willing companion therein when they married. Together they made Macready's acquaintance, an acquaintance that ripened into lifelong friendship. After Macready's death my mother wrote a short book of her memories, *Macready as I knew him*, which holds its deserved place in the literature of the English theatre. You will find it good reading, and you will learn from it, if you have picked up any prejudice to the contrary, that good nineteenth-century acting was quite alive.

When Macready left the stage I was still too young to be taken to the play. But I was with my parents when they spent a few days with him at Sherborne (by no means their first visit) in the time of the Crimean War, and he read out Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* and passages from *Paradise Lost*. I was, of course, incapable of appreciating his art, but I still remember his impressive voice and his clear articulation. Some modern actors, I believe, mumble their dialogue under the delusion that when mumbled it sounds more natural. They forget that in any case it is not

natural to carry on confidential talk in a voice which has to be audible all over the theatre : not to speak of *asides* and whispers. Delaunay told my parents that he had studied the exact whisper appropriate to every square yard of the stage of the Théâtre Français. All art has to be conventional, not mere imitation but interpretation through a particular medium, and, though it may seem a paradox, dramatic art is the most conventional of all. Pretended returns to nature are only new conventions which may be good or bad. And so, I think, Macready would have said. Certainly he would have condemned those who neglect elocution, on or off the stage, under pretence of being natural.

Between the reign of Macready and the reign of Irving there was one English actor who might have achieved greatness under better conditions. Robson was capable of being a tragedian, but he was condemned to act in burlesques, and his real power was revealed only in glimpses.

Among the Victorian actors, I knew Henry Irving pretty well. His theatrical career is on record in the biographies and critical essays of several writers, my brother Walter's not the least though not long, but there is one thing I want to set down. To my mind his real genius was for high comedy, not the most popular branch of acting but one of the hardest. In many parts of many kinds he was distinguished, ingenious, brilliant, even commanding, but in this he was consummate. His Benedict and Ellen Terry's Beatrice were a perfect pair, and in 'The Belle's

Stratagem' he was not less perfect. He ought to have played Mercutio in 'Romeo and Juliet,' but the stupid convention of the leading actor always taking the leading part was too strong. As an actor-manager he made some bad mistakes in his choice of new plays. I should like to know of any actor-manager who did not, or to hear of any criterion by which the success or failure of a new production can be foretold. We have seen promising ones come to naught for no clear assignable reason, and pieces of little intrinsic merit lifted into a triumphant long run by the acting of one part. So, I suppose, it will always be.

Your grandmother and I knew Ellen Terry off the stage too. She was quite as charming at home as on the boards, and what more can one say? One or two French actors, puzzled by the novel fascination of her art, called it amateurish, a mistake of which it is needless to demonstrate the enormity. The fact that in her latter days she was apt to forget her words is irrelevant. It has been said, and I can well believe it, that she was capable of pretending to forget them when she thought them too foolish.

There was among my acquaintance one excellent artist of the Victorian time, who had been of Macready's company, and carried on all that was good in the old stage tradition, namely Mrs. Stirling. Just before I was called to the Bar, in the interval between her continuous professional activity and her return to the stage in 1879, I took lessons in reading from her. If I know better what to do with my voice than most lecturers and

after-dinner speakers (which in this country is not saying very much) I owe it largely to those lessons. Incidentally, I found that Mrs. Stirling's appreciation of English literature was by no means confined to the drama. Here I will allow myself a grumble at the very poor average quality of public speaking and reading in England. We suffer fumbling and mumbling such as are not tolerated in America nor in Scotland, I cannot tell why: perhaps it is for the same obscure reason that makes it possible, now and then, for well-educated men who are called upon to preside at meetings to show themselves wholly ignorant of a chairman's business, and appear quite unaware of their incompetence. As to reading, the very worst is in our churches. On this grievance a much better churchman than myself and a master of elocution, my late learned friend Sir Edward Clarke, was in full accord with me. One would think it belonged to the undertaking of theological colleges to teach young clergymen, among other things, to read the lessons decently. Something, indeed, is done at the universities and public schools, and is good so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Really it ought to be part of our general education to know that our Authorized Version, whatever else and whatever more it may be, ought to be treated with the respect due to a great classic of English prose, *testo di lingua* as the Italians say. Sacrilege is of many kinds, and among them I count the delivery of such a text with a slovenly gabble or, even worse, with an unmeaning sing-song intonation.

Either way ruins the life and force of the language. But many good people, I fear, cherish a queer belief (which certainly they will not find anywhere in Scripture) that there is something profane in allowing a sacred book to be a real book.

My knowledge of French dramatic art is mainly derived from the Comédie Française. Educated English people know much more about it than they did in my youth, but I may tell or remind you that it is one of the two French institutions whose continuous history goes back to the days of the monarchy. Its constitution has been sundry times revised—notably by the decree which Napoleon, by a wilfully theatrical gesture, issued from Moscow—but it is still the *Maison de Molière*. There are, and I suppose there will be, those who regard it as a fusty survival of archaic tradition. As I am not undertaking an exposition of dramatic history, I will merely warn you not to accept any such opinion without examination. The other (and older) institution to which I have alluded is the Collège de France; and this fact alone is a striking proof of the distinguished position, established both by official support and by unofficial opinion, which French drama has long enjoyed among the liberal arts. It so happens that the period we call Victorian, especially the last half century of it, was a golden age for the Théâtre Français. The best account of its fortunes and achievements during that time, so far as I know, is to be found in the *Journal* of Edmond Got, who entered the company in 1844,

and was its *doyen* for about twenty years before his retirement in 1896.<sup>1</sup> I knew that great comedian well enough on the stage, but barely made his acquaintance off it, so I can praise him and his work without any personal bias. You may learn from him how it stood with French actors when ours were still struggling for social recognition, and Macready was all but a singular exception in being free of the company of scholars and gentlemen. Got was by no means a self-made man to begin with. When he went through the regular course of the Conservatoire he could already say, like Victor Hugo's Aymery in the *Légende des Siècles* :

Je sais lire en latin et je suis bachelier.

Between his preliminary studies and his acceptance at the Théâtre Français Got had an interval of military service as a light cavalry trooper : he volunteered for Algeria, and served not without distinction. Riding from a flanking party into a smart skirmish, he rescued an officer of Spahis from an unequal combat with a gigantic Arab, and was promoted corporal. He says, perhaps with excessive modesty, that it was really his horse's doing. In later years, besides many general impressions of current events, he records conversations of divers eminent persons : one at which he was present, being still quite a young man, between Béranger, Chateaubriand and Lamennais. Once he was introduced to Balzac in the street,

<sup>1</sup> *Journal de Edmond Got*, publié par son fils Médéric Got. Paris, 1910. 2 vols.

late in the evening ; he was already known as a rising actor of marked intelligence, and Balzac catechized him up and down the whole range of dramatic art till he could keep awake no longer. With Emile Augier and other dramatic authors he was in constant touch and frequent correspondence. Got's critical notes on his own profession, and also on other arts and on books, begun at about the age of an English undergraduate when he takes his B.A. degree, show in such a young man a remarkably sound and mature judgment. In the matters of his own calling he was one of the first to appreciate Mounet-Sully's genius, at which the guardians of classical tradition at first shook their heads. Such could be the life of a French actor rising to eminence in the days of the Second Empire. It would be hard to find a similar type of man on our stage ; impossible, I think, in that generation. In my own time Bancroft perhaps came nearest to it. (Can you believe, by the way, that Bancroft was blackballed at the Athenæum by clerical members ? But his proposer, undaunted, put him down again, and he lived to be triumphantly elected.)

One of Got's most difficult and successful achievements was the command of the expedition to London undertaken by the company of the Français in the early summer of 1871, when Paris was under the short-lived and merely local revolutionary government of the Commune. Thereby he was involved in a personal adventure by no means without risk ; he had to make a flying visit to Paris to look after his old parents, who



were alone in the midst of civil war. When he started out on his return to London the recapture of Paris was already well begun, and he had to make his way out as it were between two fires ; he was arrested by Communards, mistaken for an obnoxious priest and near being shot. Having escaped these dangers, Got was by virtue of his office his company's spokesman at the luncheon given to them at the Crystal Palace. It was a memorable occasion, and the only one on which I have heard an Englishman speak French in public exactly like a cultivated Frenchman : this was Lord Granville, whose education was partly French (I think my contemporary, Lord Lansdowne, could have done the same for the like reason). The test, in the presence of special masters of French elocution, was of course the severest possible. I well remember Lord Granville's opening words : ' Messieurs, il ne faut jurer de rien, c'est M. Got qui nous l'a dit ' (the title and final lines of Musset's ' Proverbe ' just performed by the company). Horace Wigan was there too and spoke in very good French, but it was not quite the real thing. Got's response, an evidently genuine expression of cordial thanks for support and encouragement in a time of trouble, may be seen in his *Journal*.

The first expedition of the Comédie Française to London was a matter of emergency ; the war of 1870 and the troubles of the Commune following upon it had brought the finances of the company very low and something had to be done to restore them. But the welcome given to the

French actors was so warm and the adventure was so profitable that this proved to be only the first of several official or semi-official visits. In 1871 my parents were already devotees of the Français; later, in Paris as well as in London, they continued to improve the acquaintance, and it ripened into real friendship with Delaunay and Mounet-Sully. With Mounet and his wife we became intimate. Whereby, being in Paris during the Exhibition of 1900, I had a long talk with Mounet-Sully on the character of Hamlet; the weather was oppressively hot but one of us at least forgot the temperature. The acting French version of 'Hamlet' was rather a paraphrase than a translation: among other offences it committed the enormous one of interpolating a love scene between Hamlet and Ophelia. But Mounet, though he did not read English, had studied Shakespeare's text in the accurate rendering published under Victor Hugo's auspices, and so knew the real Hamlet. At a rehearsal of the first production in Paris the adapter, Paul Meurice, was ill-advised enough to suggest to Mounet that he was not following the author's intention, meaning himself. Thereupon Mounet drew himself up to his full height and settled the question by saying in his most commanding voice: 'L'auteur est mort.' Concerning the part I said to Mounet-Sully that he was the only Hamlet I had seen who fully brought out one capital point. Hamlet was not only Prince of Denmark but a great gentleman and a person not to be trifled with. That impression must be given on Hamlet's first

entrance, and it must at once be clear that the King is afraid of him. If Hamlet had been, as some actors have made him, a scholar and artist rather bored by being a prince, Claudius would already have thrown him out of window or otherwise disposed of him, and the play would never begin. Mounet agreed that such was his own view. If I mistake not, it was also Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson's, but his physical qualities could not quite reach the effect of Mounet-Sully's commanding presence. (Once I saw Hamlet played by an English actor I will not name, an eminent one too, in a fashion wholly lacking dignity, which made me think that a discontented deacon of some small provincial chapel had strayed into Denmark by mistake.)

The difference between Mounet-Sully's Hamlet and Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson's was only a hair's-breadth difference between two admirable interpretations. There were those who said Mounet was too violent. Now if anything is clear among the problems of the play, it is that Hamlet disguises his real emotions by putting on a wilfully unmeasured extravagance even when he is serious. The critics should have criticized Shakespeare. Several years later there was a similar resemblance and contrast of almost equal merits in the productions of 'Twelfth Night' by Granville Barker in London and the Vieux Colombier company in Paris, the latter only a few months before the Great War. Under Granville Barker's direction the acting was excellent, the scenery and decoration beautiful without being obtrusive. As

‘ TWELFTH NIGHT ’

the play was given by the Vieux Colombier, in a hall not built for stage plays, the mounting was of the simplest and most frugal kind, back cloths the only scenery ; but that did not matter. The perfectly trained actors carried off Shakespeare's exquisite humours, in a really good translation, with a Southern sparkle hardly attainable by modern English performers ; I suspect the Elizabethan stage, with its conventions still plastic and the influence of the Italian Renaissance in full swing, had more of it. In spite of the words being French, one felt that here was the absolute spirit of Shakespearian comedy. I must add that the quite recent production of this play at Sadler's Wells was informed by the same spirit and would be very hard to beat. I should like to see ‘ Twelfth Night ’ given by the Old Vic. and the Vieux Colombier companies on consecutive nights or at least within a week. (For my sins, I have seen it played in England by well-meaning amateurs. *Non ragionam di lor*, but I would not say *guarda* to any friend.)

One liberty was taken at the Vieux Colombier, not with the text but with the action. It was in the burlesque duel between Andrew Aguecheek and Viola. When Viola perceived that Sir Andrew was only a poltroon, she plucked up courage, disclosed a cunning of fence wholly unknown to Elizabethan ladies, and launched a perfectly neat and correct attack *en flèche*. Certainly this was not according to Shakespeare's intention nor to stage tradition, but also certainly it was too brilliant to be censured.

Later, again, in the summer of 1932, 'Twelfth Night' was produced at Wyndham's New Theatre, a production worthy to be bracketed with the Vieux Colombier's. Most notable, where all was good, was Jean Forbes-Robertson's rendering of Viola, not less judicious than brilliant. There are many lines in the part which even a good artist may be sorely tempted to take as purple patches of serious drama and declaim accordingly. Not so Miss Forbes-Robertson. She never forgets nor lets the audience forget that this play, disporting itself at ease between farce and high comedy, does not at any time cease to be a comedy. Such are the nice discriminations, justly conceived and aptly expressed, that mark the difference between competence and mastery.

There remains in my memory another and quite different achievement—a matter of some ten years earlier, I think—of a French company in Shakespeare, when Antoine produced 'King Lear' in an exact prose version and without cuts. The time usually consumed in changes of scene was saved by running a curtain across the back of the stage without interrupting the dialogue. Of the acting I can only say at this distance of time that it was excellent throughout. In the result, the poetry of the original had evaporated, as was unavoidable, and there remained, standing out all the more grim, the colossal barbaric tragedy of the action; we cannot know whether it appeared as barbaric to Shakespeare as to us. I have seen 'King Lear' in London and at Vienna (where the Lear, once a notable actor, was too

far past his prime) but neither of those productions would bear comparison with Antoine's. Some readers—not you nor your parents, who know—may think me a Gallomaniac. The short answer to them is that they did not see those performances and I did.

When I congratulate myself on having seen the Théâtre Français in one of its golden ages, I am quite aware that often old people prize their earlier above their more recent experience, not because the normal measure of their youthful delights was in truth any higher, but because their aged perceptions are duller, not to mention the difficulty of doing justice to anything new. Yet a permanent institution must have its eminent periods of good fortune, and I make bold to think that for the Comédie Française the last forty years or so of the nineteenth century were really such a period. High or serious comedy, I have already said, is the most exacting test of dramatic art, and in my youth and middle age the Français specially excelled in it. There was Bressant, most noble of serio-comic heroes, at times almost making one forget the comic element in the part, and rather calling on one to pity mankind with him; so it was in the 'Misanthrope,' where he seemed the only real man in a world of shams. If this were a fault, it was a splendid one. His delivery of the simple little song, 'Si le roi m'avait donné Paris, sa grand'ville' was a perfect example of dignified elocution. In these latter days Alceste has been acted so as to bring out more distinctly the fact that after all he is a rather absurd per-

son, with all his nobility, a sort of Don Quixote at the court of the Grand Monarque. This is legitimate, and likely to be what Molière intended : but one could not wish that a line of Bressant's rendering had been different.

Then there was Got, the most complete and versatile master of the comic drama. As his journal shows, he was always diffident of his own success and seeking for some new touch of perfection. He was at his best, I think, in those parts where a human being attracting our sympathy and even esteem is gradually revealed under a more or less ludicrous figure, as in 'Le Gendre de M. Poirier' and 'Le Duc Job.' I have not heard of any successor to him. Again, there was Delaunay, an exquisite *jeune premier* long after he was middle-aged off the boards, and in particular the ideal expounder of Alfred de Musset's 'Proverbes' whether their dominant tone was comic as in 'Il ne faut jurer de rien' or tragic as in 'Ou ne badine pas avec l'amour.' He had an admirable partner in Mlle Favart, whose talent inclined rather to the tragic. In the older classical repertory he was no less excellent, though in the 'Misanthrope' his Alceste fell short—only fell short—of the commanding dignity which, as I said just now, Bressant gave to the part.

Favart was the centre of a worthy concert of sister artists, as harmonious in their divers notes—with one singular exception, but that was a little after her time—as the men. The senior, Madeleine Brohan, was a queen of high comedy. Croizette was an actress of individual type and

with a peculiar fascination, whose talent seemed to me never to find its full opportunity. She should have played the Queen in 'Hamlet,' a part I have never seen adequately rendered; there was a certain voluptuous atmosphere about her which would have fitted it exactly. Samary, whose dramatic career was too short, embodied the lighter comic spirit to perfection. She had an irresistible laugh—not even Ellen Terry could laugh quite like that. Reichemberg was the incomparable *ingénue*, delightful in all parts. It is true that she did not make much of Ophelia; but I have never known any actress who did. The explanation, I believe, is that really there is very little to be made of it. Ophelia has no character when she is sane and not much when she is mad. As once I heard Coquelin say in the course of a general talk, she is *une petite personne insignifiante*. Certainly she is in love with Hamlet—as, like enough, many ladies of the Court were—but there is nothing to show that it is more than a passing fancy or has the makings of a great passion. Her affection for Polonius is unconvincing because unexplained. He is not a dotard, still less a pantaloon (his age may be between fifty and sixty), but at best he is an ordinary courtier with no brains of his own. His advice to Laertes is only a neat expression of the maxims current in the polite society of the Renaissance and to be found in any one of a dozen Italian books. To the King and Queen he was rather tedious, to Hamlet, who was in no mood to study the comic aspects of court manners, an intolerable bore, and



a butt for momentary distraction from graver matters. Not that Hamlet would allow lesser folk to take liberties with Polonius; for after all he was a gentleman: on the contrary he charges the players to treat him with respect: 'Follow that lord, and look you mock him not.' One would think such a father as Polonius deserved no more than decent mourning even from his own children. No special affection for a slain kinsman (not to say parent) was required to start a blood-feud. Laertes had a very good quarrel with Hamlet. But the treachery of his poisoned rapier is altogether beyond the allowance of medieval or even Renaissance ways. When Benvenuto Cellini had a wrong to avenge, he walked straight up to his enemy and killed him openly in the street. There is nothing to explain why Laertes should be anything worse than an impulsive young gallant of the Renaissance. Polonius and his family, so much of them as we see, are something of a puzzle. Shakespeare, however, did not give his audience—and probably not himself—time to ask too curious questions about the behaviour of his subordinate persons.

Sarah Bernhardt was outside the regular tradition and the normal sphere of the Comédie Française. She flashed across the venerable constellation as a glittering and disturbing meteor. Your great-grandmother and I saw nearly the first of her in 'Phèdre'—the play, not the part. It was some time in the first years of the Third Republic. The heroine was played neither well nor ill (except that in such a part mediocrity is not tolerable)

by a lady who was then on trial and who never became a *sociétaire*. But there was something so remarkable about the minor part of Aricie—the confidante rendered necessary by the convention of French drama which does not admit either the Shakespearian soliloquy or the Attic chorus—that at the end my mother and I said to one another, That young woman will go far. That Aricie was Sarah Bernhardt. Now Sarah's talents, her affectations and her tempers, will be an ancient story to you and the extravagances at any rate may not signify much. Of the tempers it is enough to say that once at rehearsal Mounet-Sully, a great gentleman as well as artist, was provoked to speak words of and concerning Sarah which I may not print. On the more interesting question whether she was really a great actress I would appeal to those—for there must still be a good few living—who remember both her and Duse. No doubt is possible about Eleanora Duse's genius. And when one tries to think what Sarah would have made of Magda or of Cleopatra, the conclusion seems inevitable that beside Duse's art Sarah Bernhardt's was—to say it bluntly—a bag of tricks : mighty pretty tricks and executed with astonishing skill, but nevertheless tricks—unlimited virtuosity on an instrument of limited compass, but not imaginative genius. For that very reason Sarah was unequalled in Doña Sol. 'Hernani' is not properly a drama but a gorgeous procession of puppets, and Doña Sol is not a real person at all. She was a vehicle for the charming voice and exquisite diction which made one

overlook the fact—a fact pointed out without mercy, in a few lines, by the comic genius embodied in George Meredith—that the whole action is monstrously and incredibly absurd.

Sarah's well-known fancy for playing men's parts had some odd results, especially when, for a time, quite contrary to her usual and proper habit, she became positively stout. In that period, being in London, she acted Maeterlinck's Pelléas to the Mélisande of a brilliant and charming English actress. Sarah did not, in the circumstances, look at all fairy-like or Maeterlinckian; and her colleague's French, though passable and more than passable for all ordinary purposes, could not hold its own in her presence as Lord Granville's French had done, on that memorable earlier occasion I have already mentioned, with Got's. Thus I came away with an impression of the dialogue something like this:

*Mélisande.* Je ne suis pas heureuse! je ne suis pas heureuse!

*Pelléas.* Mais dis-moi donc, Mélisande, pourquoi tu n'es pas heureuse.

*M.* Aoh! moi trouvais que vous étiez plus gras et plus vieux que le gros Golaud.

*P.* Explique-toi, Mélisande, tu parles une langue qui m'est inconnue.

Not a just or even a fair impression, of course, but I cannot think that Maeterlinck would have been satisfied with the performance. But when all is said, Sarah Bernhardt was an artist of immense energy, splendidly effective in the effects within her compass, admirable when she was not

perverse, and I suppose she must have been loveable to some persons at some times.

Now, of all impossible things one would like to be possible, that which I most wish for at this moment is that I could call up my old friend and mentor in things dramatic, John Willis Clark of Cambridge, who guided my first steps towards appreciation of the French stage in general and the Comédie Française in particular: for then I might be assured by him whether I have been talking sense or folly.

### § III. THE GRAPHIC ARTS

Do not be surprised, my grandson, that I have not much to tell you about painters and their works. I have known a good few, but not in such intimacy or continuous converse as to furnish me with matter deserving special record. One artist there was, master craftsman in sundry kinds, whom I should have liked to know, William Morris, an exquisite medieval miniaturist, among other things, born by accident in the nineteenth century. There was no reason why I should not meet him, but somehow I never did. George Richmond, a friend of my parents, had been a young friend and disciple of Blake's, and his son, whom I also knew well, a distinguished painter on lines of his own, was named William Blake. But in those days Blake meant nothing to the majority even of English people interested in art, and Richmond was no missionary. I knew nothing

of his Blake tradition in his lifetime. By the way, hereditary talent took an unexpected turn in the third generation of that family. Sir Herbert Richmond has lived not only to be an admiral and fill important posts, but to see his ideas recognized in high places after long neglect. As a mere landsman, though one who has thought more or less about sea power for many years, I say no more.

Sir William Boxall, sometime Director of the National Gallery, is, I suppose, little remembered ; him I remember from my infancy. His one mistake in buying a very interesting Dutch picture as a Rembrandt was after all no such bad bargain for the Gallery. For the rest, mistakes have been made in all museums in the world except the few historical collections where nothing has ever been bought. Boxall knew all there was to know about painting, perhaps even too much, for he was so fastidious about his own work that he could hardly bring himself to finish anything. Of this diffidence I possess, as I hope you may in time, a treasured memorial (let the reader whom it does not interest remember that I am writing for you in the first instance and skip if he will). When my mother was still a young married woman she sat to Boxall ; when he had nearly done he was not satisfied, and would not finish the picture. So it remained a derelict until I married. Then George Richmond persuaded Boxall to let him complete it—in water-colour to keep the supplementary work distinct, a pretty piece of conscientiousness—and the two veteran artists combined to give it me as a wedding

present. It is not an ambitious work, but in the family we enjoy it as a pleasing and indeed a charming example of nineteenth-century portraiture.

One development of artistic interest and profitable knowledge in this country has given me great pleasure since it took its rise about half a century ago and was fostered by good friends of mine, Colvin who has passed away and Lord Conway, still happily with us : I mean the study of archæology. When I was young the chief and almost exclusive aim of classical education was literary. Scholarship meant a close and exact familiarity with the works of the great Greek and Latin authors, within defined periods beyond which only specialists adventured. There was a certain difference between our ancient universities. At Oxford, by a modernized scholastic tradition, some stress was laid on mastery of the matter apart from the form, especially in ancient philosophy, while the Cambridge school, following and exaggerating the quite sound humanist tradition of the Renaissance, exalted pure scholarship, as it was called, the precise knowledge of language and idiom, and studied correct imitation of them and all but made an idol of it. Either way, however, it was a study of books and very little else, and of select books only. Learners were discouraged from wandering. Post-classical Greek was just bad Greek, post-classical Latin just bad Latin ; the Middle Ages were ignored. As for art, even the most strictly classical, it was only by some accident outside the regular course that any one encouraged us to be

interested in it. We were left to pick up scraps of indifferent reproduction, dating from the days before photography was in use, from our dictionaries of antiquities, or choke on the pemmican of Becker's 'Gallus' and 'Charicles,' and generally to find out as best we might that 'the ancients' were human beings living in a real world not quite like ours. We had of course heard of the Parthenon, but it occurred to few of us to walk into the British Museum. Attic vase paintings were as much a mystery to us as to our fathers, who had accepted from our grandfathers a vague belief that they were Etruscan.

There may have been an obscure connection between the narrow bookishness of English classical scholarship and the great illusion of the promoters of Useful Knowledge who did much mixed good and harm in the Reform Bill period, namely, that everything worth learning could be learnt from books. Anyhow we were brought up under a tyranny of pens and ink, and print. The straiter sect of our preceptors would have pitied Furtwängler, Salomon Reinach and Sir James Frazer as lost souls enticed from the true path into the limbo of mere dilettantes and antiquaries.

Only after I took my degree these dry bones were stirred. At Cambridge the new epoch was inaugurated by the opening of a museum of archæology in the spring of 1884. It was a memorable gathering of scholars: Newton, Sir F. Burton, Leighton, Jebb, Munro, Russell Lowell, then Minister here of the United States, and, not least, Lord Houghton. In his old age Lord Houghton

looked much like a Silenus incongruously translated from some Renaissance picture of a Bacchanal procession, a sleepy Silenus moreover. Any stranger who knew him not and saw him apparently dozing on the platform might have asked what that queer old gentleman was doing there. His turn came, and he not only showed himself worthy of his company but made the most brilliant and charming speech of all. Altogether, a day to have lived for.

As landmarks in the progress and triumph of this great reform I may note the publication of Furtwängler's *Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture* in 1895, and the exhibition of Greek art at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1904. In these later years the impulse continues to spread; we are beginning to know and to enjoy with understanding medieval art on the one hand and Oriental art on the other, no longer dismissing them with a passing glance as mere curiosities.

The moral of all this is that the derided old classics—if only we view them with living and alert eyes—are still at the centre of the humanities. Live art, certainly, must justify itself by capacity of producing new forms. But mere negation of rule and proportion will not make a new form; and it is worth observing that those who do invent new forms neither boast of their novelty nor affect to despise the old ones.



## CHAPTER V

### THE INNS OF COURT AND LEARNED FRIENDS

#### § I

**A**T the time of this present writing, in the year 1931, I am Treasurer of Lincoln's Inn, and more like the Podestà or Senator of a medieval Italian republic than any man in the world except my learned friends the Treasurers of the other three Inns. These four Societies, which alone in all England have for more than five centuries behaved like corporations without being or wanting to be bodies corporate, have been quite properly likened to colleges, yet I am not much like the Head of a House at Oxford or Cambridge. I hold office for only one year, more like an Athenian archon or a Roman consul; there is no visible badge of office and no formal admission, and a good deal of executive and initiative power is combined with various reminders that I am no more than *primus inter pares* in our fellowship of equals. Lords of Appeal, Judges, King's Counsel, Members of Parliament in or out of office, or simple juniors, we are one and all, among ourselves, merely Masters of the Bench in our order of seniority. Sometimes I think the Benchers of the Inns of Court are the only pure democracies

left in Europe, and this just because they are self-electing aristocratic bodies governed by strong professional tradition both as to the persons to be elected and otherwise. Such are not the historic features of the colleges at our English universities, with their founders and endowments, their charters, their elaborate written statutes and their domestic discipline. And yet the life of the Inns of Court is in a broad sense collegiate ; in substance more so now than it has been at any time since the decay of their old customs in the Restoration period, and in form certainly more so than in the days before the sixteenth century, when the Inn had no single head but was ruled by a small body of elected Governors. The analogy becomes more convincing if we look abroad, to the colleges which existed in Continental universities before the Inns of Court were born.

Let us turn to the account given by the late Dr. Rashdall, a most learned and judicious author.<sup>1</sup>

The students of Paris, as of all other medieval universities, originally lived in the town, where and how they pleased. In point of fact the usual way of living was for a party of students to take a house together, in which they formed a small self-governing community. These establishments were at Paris usually called *hospitia* [still the proper Latin name of our Inns of Court].

The members were called *socii* (and members of the Inns of Court are properly though not now usually called fellows) ; the headship was elective ;

<sup>1</sup> *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vi. 574.

a less democratic government, control by a higher general authority, and regular provision for teaching, came later. Our students of the law followed much the same course ; but as early as we get any glimpse of our Inns there is a body of masters, with distinctions of rank among them, now long obsolete and in part obscure, instructing their juniors by lectures and disputations.

The statement once made by Lord Campbell (neither a learned nor an accurate historian) that the Inns of Court were originally dining clubs and nothing more<sup>1</sup> is without foundation. If there was any priority, the first object must have been to secure lodging: meals were easier to find even if inns (in the usual modern sense) and cookshops were fewer than in the City. Moreover, there is no doubt that common study as well as living in common was an object from the first.

After the Restoration, in the general decay of the older professional training and customs, it is true that the Inns of Chancery, originally, it seems, technical schools for clerical work, and then subordinate members of the Inns of Court (compare the 'limbs' of the Cinque Ports and the relation of halls to colleges at Oxford) did degenerate into mere dining clubs of solicitors; they are now finally extinct.

In the Inns of Court, however, there was no

<sup>1</sup> Arguing as Attorney-General in the case, now almost forgotten, where the Serjeants upheld their claim to exclusive audience in the Court of Common Pleas. See Manning, *Serviens ad legem*, p. 140.

central body resembling the university of Paris, Oxford or Cambridge. The only superior authority was and to this day is in the hands of the King's judges. The Inns present their qualified members to the judges for admission to plead in the Courts as colleges present theirs to the university to be admitted to degrees ; in each case the effectual admission is the act of the superior.

A student is called only to the bar of the inn of court of which he is a fellow. In consequence of being called to the bar of an inn of court, he is received at the bar of the courts of law.<sup>1</sup>

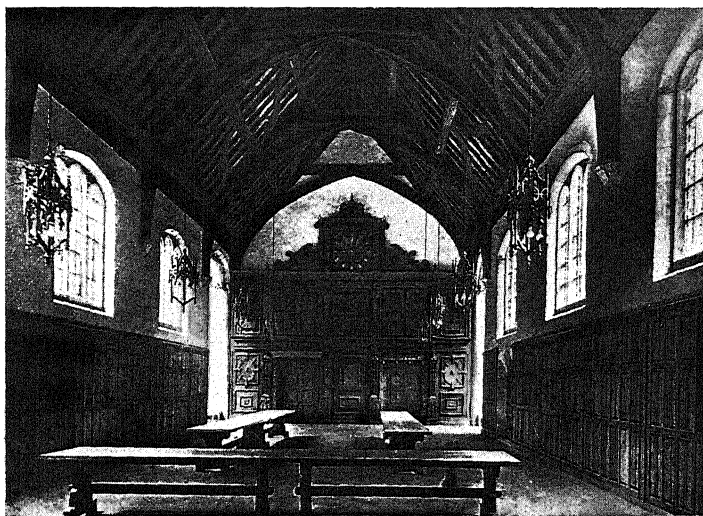
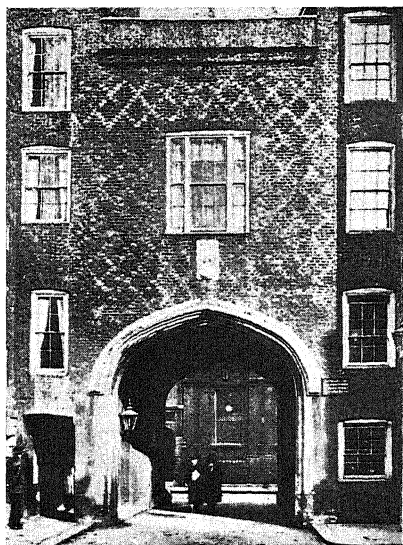
We may presume that the Inns were required, as an express or understood condition of their privilege, to see that regular instruction in the law should be given by their senior to their junior members. A certain correspondence may be observed in the matter of ranks between the universities and the Inns of Court. The commencing student may be likened to an undergraduate and the barrister to a graduate with full membership of the university (not forgetting that in a medieval university every Master of Arts was bound to take part in teaching for a certain time) ; and the higher state of a Serjeant-at-law has long ago been compared to the Doctor's degree. Here, however, there is a diversity. Doctors of our

<sup>1</sup> Manning's note, *op. cit.*, p. 328 ; for detailed discussion see W. C. Bolland's articles in *L.Q.R.* xxiii. 438, xxiv. 392 ; Sir W. Holdsworth's, xxiii. 448, is incorporated with no material change in the second volume of his *History of English Law* : see also the chapter on English Law and the Reception in vol. 4.

universities are not divorced from their colleges by entering one of the superior Faculties ; but so long as serjeants were created a newly made serjeant ceased to be a member of his Inn. The serjeants had Inns of their own (latterly only one) and serjeants who were appointed to be judges of the common-law courts (including those who were made serjeants, as was the more common case in the nineteenth century, only to qualify them for the appointment) continued to be members of the order. I have not met with any attempt to explain the sharpness of the distinction between the serjeants and the rest of the profession, beyond the fact that serjeants owed their rank not to the Inns but to the King's command expressed in his writ. One may guess that the serjeants were already an organized company before, though not much before, the Inns of Court took shape. All which goes to show that comparisons very seldom run on all fours, especially in matters dating from the Middle Ages.

The decay of the serjeants, who were gradually superseded by the much later institution of King's Counsel, and their final extinction when the Judicature Act abolished the formal necessity of judges being serjeants, do not concern us here ; but one good result was that the governing bodies of the Inns of Court were no longer impoverished by the pick of their members leaving them when promoted to the judicial bench.

Apart from the control of the judges there was nothing but common professional tradition to keep the four Inns of Court on uniform lines till almost



LINCOLN'S INN  
The Old Gateway and interior of the restored Old Hall  
*By courtesy of the Masters of the Bench.*



my own time, but there was no material divergence. Early in the third quarter of the nineteenth century the Inns established a scheme of joint committees for dealing with admission to the Bar, discipline, and other matters of common interest ; and there are much earlier examples of occasional joint orders. Set out on paper the plan would look pretty cumbrous ; in fact, it works quite smoothly and with reasonable expedition. The reports of these committees are almost always accepted by the Inns ; I remember only one case of importance in which the dissent of one Inn caused a promising plan to be dropped. There is not much to be found about our constitution in print, still less about its working, and I think it has always been something of a mystery to the majority of the profession.

The comparative antiquity of the Inns is undetermined and, if we knew all the facts might still be indeterminate for lack of single definite acts of foundation. Lincoln's Inn has the earliest extant records. Our Black Books go back without a break to 1422, so in 1922 we celebrated their quincentenary with fitting observance. One remarkable feature of that ceremony was an excellent speech delivered in perfect English by the Marquis Merry del Val, then Spanish Ambassador. What we are really most proud of, however, is the restoration of our old hall—restoration in the true and proper sense—which we have lately carried out. Our misguided predecessors, about the end of the eighteenth century, condemned this beautiful example of late medieval brickwork as



'Gothick,' so it would seem,<sup>1</sup> and disguised the outside with stucco, having already concealed the open timber vaulting inside by putting in a false roof of the same stuff. In the execution of this crime the principal villains were the notorious architect Wyatt and one Bernasconi, a kind of plasterer. The barbarism last mentioned finally brought its own revenge; the walls were quite properly built in the first instance to carry one roof and not two, and the burden of an added false ceiling was more than they could withstand. For a century the mischief went on, not wholly unobserved, once or twice clumsily botched. In 1924 the whole structure was found to be in danger. Something had to be done, and the Bench decided to do it thoroughly, strip the whole of the stucco from the outer walls, and restore the building to its original condition so far as might be. In the course of four years the work was done by the Inn's own staff under the direction of its advising architect, without employing any outside contractor. The hall was reconstructed brick by brick, stone by stone, and beam by beam, and reinforced with new material only where decay or damage—the damage mostly caused by the stucco fiends—had made this clearly necessary.<sup>2</sup> In November 1928 the Queen was pleased to open the restored hall: the King's absence—for we had

<sup>1</sup> Not only motives for their crime do not appear but the original resolution is missing from the Black Book; there are later incidental orders.

<sup>2</sup> Full details are given by the late Sir John W. Simpson, the architect, in his monograph *Some account of the old hall of Lincoln's Inn*, Brighton, 1928 (pr. pr.).

hoped to welcome our Senior Benchers in person—being the first warning of the long and dangerous illness which ensued. Probably most of our younger members already take the present aspect of the Old Hall as a matter of course.

In the Middle Ages, and down to the interruption of all festal customs by civil war, music of some kind was common in the Inns of Court, and it had to be of the best on great occasions when a masque or a play with masque-like dances was presented. Medieval craftsmen had, I suspect, some empirical tradition about the acoustic properties of buildings which was lost in the transition to an Italianate style. However that may be, our Old Hall proved itself an excellent music room in 1931, when, on the request of my learned friend Mr. Fachiri, promoted by myself as Treasurer, the Bench granted the use of it for a memorial chamber concert as near as might be to the centenary of Joseph Joachim's birth: the actual birthday fell on a Sunday, June 28, so the concert was on the 29th. As a genial reporter said in *The Times*, it was a kind of family party; the violinists, Mrs. Fachiri and her sister Jelly d'Arányi, being Joachim's great-nieces, the singer, Gabriele Joachim, his granddaughter, and the pianist Donald Tovey—perhaps the most learned of English musicians in my time—an old friend and admirer though no relative, and, moreover, a friend of mine through his father, who was my contemporary at Cambridge. The panelled walls, free from breaks and recesses, responded admirably to the music; the audience, a rather notable audience,

just filled the hall ; altogether it was a worthy and delightful commemoration of a great master and few things have given me greater pleasure than the part I had in setting it on foot.

My own connection with Lincoln's Inn is not ancestral ; both my father and my grandfather were members of the Inner Temple. But when it was determined or rather assumed that the Bar was the right profession for me, my father considered (and I suppose my grandfather agreed) that the Chancery branch of it would suit better with my scholarly tastes than the more bustling and usually less academic practice of the common-law courts and the circuits. (I will not stop to consider whether the Equity Bar, and even ' pure conveyancers,' in fact are or were men of such cold, holy, and still conversation as our learned friends of the Common Law Bar supposed.) Now Lincoln's Inn has, ever since the first quarter of the eighteenth century, been the special home of Chancery practitioners. The most obvious reason is that when the Master of the Rolls became a regular judge, sitting as the Chancellor's deputy he sat at his official residence, the Rolls House, on the site of the modern Record Office, from which Lincoln's Inn is but a stone's throw. Moreover, it became the Chancellor's custom, except on certain ceremonial occasions, to hold his own sittings in the hall of Lincoln's Inn. Therein he was lucky in his day, for I suppose that in no country in the world have the seats of government and justice been cramped in such obscure and undigni-

fied, not to say scrubby, quarters as they were in England during the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century. It is said that during the South African War some important information escaped the notice of the War Office, then in Pall Mall, because the Intelligence Department was boarded out, so to speak, in the parts of Queen Anne's Gate. Not that the old hall of Lincoln's Inn, in its neglected and afterwards disfigured condition, made an imposing court of justice. For some time, after a court of appeal in Chancery was created, it was divided into two courts. Other makeshift courts were built for the Vice-Chancellors. Lincoln's Inn also found room for certain offices of the Common Law Courts. In the main, however, it was the centre of equity jurisdiction and most though by no means all of its members were attached to that branch.

At Lincoln's Inn I was entered accordingly, and within a few months of being elected to a fellowship at Trinity I changed the condition of a resident B.A. at Cambridge, a mighty pleasant one while it lasted, for that of a pupil in an eminent conveyancer's chambers: he was a master of forms and a very neat draftsman, but had no great interest in either the science or the history of law, and very little gift for explaining difficulties. I have never understood why beginners in the law should be plunged, without the least instruction in the general elements, into the most technical and perplexed branch of a science wholly new to them: but such was the usage for young men destined to the Equity Bar. Counsel who took pupils were

not expected and seldom attempted to give them any teaching or explanation beyond what was called for in the way of correcting the blunders they made in applying the precedents of forms or, when they were more advanced, in drafting an opinion. After a year of this disjointed learning I came away with a certain rule of thumb knowledge of the conveyancer's art, pretty confused notions of the laws of England and the foundations of legal science, and considerable doubt whether I had found my proper vocation. If at that moment any definite occasion had offered for returning to Cambridge and the classics, it might have been hard to resist. As it was, I was kept straight in my course by becoming attached in different ways to two great masters of the law who not only knew how to impart their learning but took pleasure in guiding and encouraging younger men. These were Lindley, who rose later through all the steps of judicial rank to be Master of the Rolls and finally a Lord of Appeal, and James Shaw Willes, who was never officially more than a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, but stood above his fellows, with barely one or two exceptions, both as a profound lawyer and as an accomplished scholar, and certainly was surpassed by none of them. Lindley was in 1870 a leading junior in the Chancery Courts, and I became his pupil in the regular course, on the advice of another very learned friend, Howard Elphinstone, known to my father through that Cambridge Society of which I have told you somewhat in a former chapter. (It might have been better for

me if I could have learnt my real property law from Elphinstone rather than another ; I suppose he had no vacancy for me in his pupil-room.) By seeing Lindley's work and hearing him explain it I learnt, as I said later in a published dedication to him, that the law is neither a trade nor a solemn jugglery, but a science. In those days, as I have said, there was no settled standard of the attention that a barrister who took pupils should give them ; Lindley gave us his best. He would call us into his own room to discuss a case he had before him, and let us see how he formed his opinion. Moreover, he had the gift of explaining, and was never impatient. Former pupils often came in to seek his advice, and took part in any discussion that might be in hand, which was an excellent thing for the novices. The result was that the disciples became the master's friends, and the friendship was life-long. In 1875 he was created a judge, not of the Court of Chancery in which he had practised, but of the Court of Common Pleas ; this was by way of inaugurating the approaching abolition of the formal barriers between equity and common law jurisdiction<sup>1</sup>—fusion as it was not very happily called—and it was a high compliment to his extensive mastery of the law. A round dozen of his old pupils gave him a dinner, and a thoroughly joyful dinner it was. My first published work was dedicated to him soon afterwards. He was one of the eminent English judges, not many, whose promotion was wholly due to their professional merit and in no way determined or

<sup>1</sup> By the Judicature Act which took effect in 1876.

accelerated by services rendered to a political party. In this respect, as well as in the extent and soundness of his learning, he resembled James Shaw Willes, the other great lawyer from whom I learnt most. Willes was a Justice of the Common Pleas from 1855 till his death in 1872, and his reported judgments are unsurpassed in their combination of exact learning with scholarship and historical research.

My father was well acquainted with Willes, who was also a particular friend of my uncle Baron Martin: and so it came to pass that Mr. Justice Willes chose me to be his marshal on the Western circuit in the summer of 1870. That office is peculiar even among the peculiarities of English institutions. The marshal of a Justice of Assize is chosen by him at his own discretion; the fee (substantial enough to be acceptable to a young man of modest means) is paid by the Treasury. As to the marshal's duties, I do not think they are to be found in any book. He may be described as the judge's aide-de-camp, private secretary and generally useful companion in the various official and semi-official matters, not being part of the judicial work, and mostly being of a festive kind, that have to be attended to out of Court. He writes and answers invitations and the like in the judge's name, and has the reward of going wherever the judge goes. It fell to my lot, at Winchester, to write a very special kind of letter, though usual, a request to the head master to grant a day's holiday in honour of the judges' presence. This had to be in Latin by long-stand-

ing custom, and there was said to be or to have been in use a common form of more or less canine Latinity, but this could not be found and I had to invent a new one. Having only that year taken my M.A. degree and being pretty fresh from the habit of Latin prose composition, I turned out an epistle which rather surprised the head master by its correctness. I am not sure that medieval Latin (of which I then knew little) would not have been historically more appropriate, but it might have been less intelligible to classical masters. In fact a friend of mine who had a son at Eton not many years ago was expected by usage much later than my schooldays to write a Latin letter to the boy's tutor, and asked for my assistance: I wrote in medieval Latin, as, nowadays coming easier to me than Augustan, and was told that the tutor did not understand it. To return to the marshal, his only active public duty is<sup>1</sup> to swear in the grand jury; when the business of the assize begins he has a reserved place in Court but is not expected to be there more than he chooses; if the law is to be his profession, and he has any mind to pursue it seriously, he will seize the opportunity of seeing how courts of justice work. Formerly the marshal was expected to make notes for the judge's use of the pleadings in civil causes, of which copies were furnished in advance of the hearing; but in the case of a young man wholly ignorant of the law, which was not uncommon, this was obviously not practicable, and so the duty had become optional. I was glad, however, to try my hand at it for the

<sup>1</sup> We must now say 'was'—1933.



sake of what I could learn in the process ; my 'prentice work cannot have aided Willes much, but, perceiving that I wished to learn, he took the pleadings as a text for my instruction. The result was that in this and other ways I learnt more of the Common Law from him in a month than I could have learnt in any other fashion in six months. There were likewise comments on the business done in the day's work in Court, and much generally instructive talk. In the course of that circuit I learnt much about the office and dignity of Justices of Assize, and the reason why they take precedence above all other persons in the county (the Sheriff and the Lord-Lieutenant not excepted, in Willes's opinion). A certain judgment delivered by Willes in 1861 is still the classical authority on their jurisdiction and its history. He could be a zealous reformer in things of substance, but had a scholar's affection for venerable forms. It was Willes, moreover, who sent me to the Year Books and started me on the path of discovering that modern English law cannot be properly understood without going back to its medieval origins and development. Besides his professional learning, Willes was an accomplished scholar and, as an Elizabethan phrase used to express it, well seen in the tongues. In particular he had travelled in Spain and mastered the spoken language, which in those days very few strangers to the country had done. He told me a pretty story of St. Peter and a bull-fighter which he had picked up at Seville from some successor of Figaro, seemingly by way of pure oral tradition, though I have seen

a slightly different version in print. As Willes related the tale, the thing happened in a Jubilee year when there were generous indulgences and souls were being released from Purgatory in crowds. The soul of a *torero* whose proper destination was Purgatory was entangled in the throng and swept right into Paradise. He walked about for a while gazing at the celestial palaces and the jewelled pavements, but among the great folks he found none of the sort he could talk and laugh with. So he thought he would go back to the gate in the hope of the porter being better company. There St. Peter very soon perceived that the *torero* had come in by mistake, and told him to go about his business to his own place. No, said the man, I came here without my own act or will, and being here I see no reason why I should go away. Peter said nothing but went on talking of this and that. Presently he looked towards the gate as if he heard something, after a little while pricked up his ears again, then broke off the talk, opened the door a little and looked out, and seemed to hear and see something of particular interest. The *torero* became curious and asked what was doing. Then St. Peter threw the gate wide open, crying *Toro ! toro !* The bull-fighter ran out to see the bull and Peter shut the gate after him.

Willes must not be supposed to have been a merely sedentary scholar even in advanced age. On that Western circuit he surprised the Winchester boys by going down to the bathing-place and showing himself an active swimmer. Moreover, he joined the Inns of Court volunteer corps

at its foundation, and was valiant (a favourite word of his own) in learning the discipline of arms until it was forced upon him that his marching days were past. Some judges of a later generation served in that corps until they rose to the Bench ; I can vouch for my uncle ' the last of the Barons ' of the old Court of Exchequer, and for Lord Justice Cotton, with whom I actually marched in the ranks. Neither of these held a commission ; Cotton was a zealous volunteer and a marksman. But I will return to the I.C.R.V. presently. Generally it may be said that from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards there has been nothing singular in leading counsel and judges retaining active or even athletic habits. Chitty and Macnaghten were University oarsmen, Alfred Wills was among the pioneers of modern mountaineering.

Another learned friend to whom I owed much was James Bryce, who had not yet taken up politics and put law in the second place (though by no means forgetting it) when I was called to the Bar. He was then, and for many years more, Regius Professor of Roman Law at Oxford, where he did much to raise law studies from an all but dormant condition to their present sound footing. The standard of Oxford law degrees is now as good as can be desired. I little expected then that later, when it became clear that my bent was for writing and teaching rather than practice, I should be Bryce's colleague for ten years. Lindley had already encouraged me to make some study of Roman law, but the days when he had himself

learnt from German masters were long past, and the elementary books then in use had gone out of date. In English there was nothing adequate or anything like adequate. As I have said in my introduction to Maine's *Ancient Law*, the literature of Roman law to be found in our own language was still, with few exceptions, antiquated or contemptible : reform may be dated from 1883, when Dr. Moyle's edition of *Justinian's Institutes* was first published, more than ten years after the time I now speak of. The German textbooks by which, following Bryce's counsel, I profited are themselves out of date by this time : but, what was much more, Bryce introduced me to Savigny, the greatest expounder of legal principles in modern Europe. Distinction of style is not a common merit in German prose writers, and least common among specialists, but Savigny's style is admirable. Even Heine, to whom Savigny's politics—those of a Prussian conservative statesman—were abomination, and who cared nothing for modern Roman or any other law, could not deny it and passed it by with a gibe : the brilliance of Savigny's writing, he said, was like a snail's slime. In Savigny's work extensive learning and complete mastery of principles are made fruitful by a singular faculty of lucid exposition. Ithering alone among his successors can be said to come near him in point of form.

I am not here concerned to speak of Queen Victoria's judges beyond what I knew of them in my own person, but you may expect me to tell you something of your ancestor and mine who was Chief Baron of the Exchequer for more than

twenty years. He had resigned his office before I began to study the law; therefore, strictly speaking, I have no professional memories of him. But I find a good general estimate of his work in a learned and impartial American writer's account of our nineteenth-century judges.<sup>1</sup>

Pollock [he writes] brought to the bench the industry and general ability which had characterized his distinguished forensic career. There have been many more learned but few more useful judges. His high-toned personality is reflected in his scholarly and felicitous opinions, which, whether right or wrong in the result, are always interesting.

More than once, after being in a minority among his brethren, he was ultimately in agreement with a majority in the House of Lords. A short but sufficient memoir of his life, including several good letters, was published in 1929 by my cousin Lord Hanworth, formerly Sir Ernest Pollock and now Master of the Rolls. The incident I shall now tell you is not there, being hardly compatible with the doubly judicial dignity of the subject and the biographer. But I am free from official restraint, and the fact is better vouched for than most anecdotes of judges in or out of Court; I had it from my grandfather himself. When he was appointed Attorney-General in 1834

<sup>1</sup> A Century of English Judicature, 1800-1900; by Van Vechten Vaeder: in *Select Essays in Anglo-American Legal History*, 1. 730; Boston, Mass., 1907. Even if the writer had lived among English lawyers his correct information and sound critical judgment would deserve high praise: considering that he must have relied mostly if not wholly on books, they are extraordinary. The passage now cited is on p. 740.

he had to be knighted, and by consequence to provide himself with a coat of arms. For this purpose he applied to the College of Arms in London, but thought the fees excessive. After some negotiation a messenger called on him from Garter King-of-Arms with a final statement of the lowest possible terms. The answer was thus: 'Tell Garter King-of-Arms with my compliments that he may go to the devil *sable* in flames *gules* with a pitchfork *ardent* stuck in his backside *proper*.' After which my grandfather, being the son of a Scot, betook himself to Lyon King-of-Arms at Edinburgh, and there found better contentment. Accordingly the title of his descendants to the arms they now bear rests on Scottish authority, and they have been considered eligible for bodies requiring some warrant of Scots origin from their members, such as the Franco-Scottish Society. Whether Garter King-of-Arms ever received the Attorney-General's message as it was given is unknown. He might have refused to take notice of it on the ground that *sable* on *gules* is bad heraldry.

You can find our family history well set forth in Lord Hanworth's book, but I may note here that on the judicial bench the Master of the Rolls has a companion of my grandfather's lineage. A daughter of the Chief Baron's married his colleague, Baron Martin; a daughter of that marriage was the wife of Edward Macnaghten of the Chancery Bar, afterwards Lord Macnaghten, and a son of this last marriage is now a judge of the King's Bench Division. Baron Martin was a northern

Irishman and accordingly it came natural to him to know all about horses. A special feature of that extra-judicial knowledge was that, as common report went, he had the Racing Calendar by heart. Ulster, moreover, gave him a certain downrightness of conviction and expression which at times appeared in his judicial functions. A letter of the Chief Baron's records that Martin once, out of Court, brushed away a subtle objection of Baron Parke's to a substantially just conclusion with the one word Nonsense : and there is a legend that in a larceny case where the facts were beyond dispute he charged the jury in these terms : ' Gentlemen of the jury, the man stole the boots ; consider your verdict.' I do not regard this as literally credible, but it is in character.

I have named Lord Macnaghten ; if you ask me who were the greatest English judges I have known, besides Willes, I should say Macnaghten and Bowen. There is next to nothing to choose between them in mastery of principle and command of instances, or in the faculty of reducing multifarious facts and perplexed argument to a rational order and singling out a decisive point. But their methods were individual and different. Bowen's reported judgments are the highly finished work of a scholar and a dialectician ; the whole reasoning process is developed under the reader's eyes till its author stands armed at all points against any possible opponent. Macnaghten had his own way of natural genius beyond the reach of art. He seems to be talking shrewdly and

pleasantly round about the whole matter, so pleasantly that you hardly stop to think what he is coming to, when with one luminous sentence he goes right to the vital point : whereupon you perceive that the irrelevant puzzles, the wrong-headed sophistries, the too clever distinctions, have already been quietly brushed aside. Often some decisive words are amusing as well as memorable. 'Thirsty men want beer, not explanations.'

Both Macnaghten and Bowen were scholarly judges (there have been eminent judges of whom this could not be honestly said) ; and in particular Bowen's scholarship was much more than that of an amateur keeping up his knowledge and taste. His translation of Virgil's *Eclogues* and the first six books of the *Æneid* was welcomed by Professor Sellar of Edinburgh and other competent judges as a notable contribution to the extremely difficult art of rendering Latin poetry in English, and also to English versification. His chosen metre, a catalectic accentual hexameter, was both novel and effective. I had the pleasure of expressing my admiration (anonymously, as the rule of the journal then required) in the *Saturday Review*. Such are the real delights of an honest reviewer. Contrary to what is or was rather commonly believed, the 'slating' of bad books is, according to their pretensions, either a passing joke or a serious and ungrateful duty. Moreover, it is even possible for an appreciative review to lead to pleasant acquaintance between the reviewer and the author. Such, at least, was my experience,



and I have no reason to think it was singular. Once, indeed, I declined a chance of that kind. I had written a review, critical but not hostile, of Samuel Butler's *Evolution Old and New*; the author wrote to the editor asking if he might know the reviewer's name, and adding that he felt sure it was a woman; the editor left it to my discretion. Hardly a promising opening, I thought. Besides which, it would be rather hard for a personal friend of Huxley and the Darwin family to get on with the man who had just been undertaking to teach Darwin and Huxley their own business and solemnly rebuking Darwin for plagiarism from his own grandfather. Then I could not have kept a grave face at Samuel Butler's opinions that music ended with Handel and the *Odyssey* was written by a woman who lived in Sicily. So the editor of the *Saturday Review* (Mr. Philip Harwood perhaps chuckling a little behind the mask) replied that the reviewer did not think fit to depart from the usage of anonymity. But when all is said, Samuel Butler was a very pretty scholar and a great satirist, and the Psalm of Montreal is immortal.

Lord Justice Chitty, with whom our family was connected by his marriage with a daughter of the Chief Baron, can hardly be reckoned among the great English judges, but he was one of the most efficient both in first instance and for a too short time in the Court of Appeal, and he was singularly beloved in the profession, as he had already been at Oxford.

The best amateur wicket-keeper in England, the finest

oar on the river, a scholar of no mean order, frank and open in disposition, bright in manner, and the hero of many boyish tales of pluck and endurance, some quaint and grotesque, but all the more fascinating on that account, he was admired and almost adored by his contemporaries at the University. And with it all he was not one bit spoiled.

So wrote Lord Macnaghten of him soon after his all but sudden death in the full tide of work.<sup>1</sup> Already, within a few days, the judges and the Bar had assembled in open Court to hear the Lord Chancellor (Halsbury) and the Attorney-General (Webster, afterwards Lord Alverstone) pay tribute on behalf of them all to Chitty's memory. 'We must all feel,' said Lord Halsbury, '(I can speak for my colleagues as well as for myself) that a warm personal friendship existed between him and ourselves.' And Sir Richard Webster: 'I can scarcely trust myself to speak of the loss that the Bar has sustained to-day. Eton, Oxford, Lincoln's Inn, the whole Bar, the whole Bench, are mourning with us at this moment.' Chitty was honoured as advocate and judge, but lovingly remembered (again in the Attorney-General's words) 'as the generous colleague, the honourable opponent, the true friend . . . the judge who gave to the advocate, however young he might be, patient attention and kind consideration.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Law Quart. Rev.* xv. 128 (April 1899), signed only with an initial, but the authorship was no secret.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 16, 1899, in the Court of Appeal. Memorandum in Law Reports [1899] 1 Ch. *ad init.* I believe a commemoration of this kind, as distinct from words spoken in particular courts, is unique in our professional experience.

## THE INNS OF COURT

There have been greater lawyers than Chitty, but no more perfect example of the best type of English lawyer. If he did go too far as a judge in turning argument into a conversation between the Court and counsel, it was nothing worse than a slight excess in following Sir George Jessel's example. When Chitty was a leader in Jessel's court, he made no formal speeches at all; the argument was a rapid and pointed talk between Jessel and Chitty, and in about ten minutes they understood one another thoroughly. This is an excellent way when both judge and counsel are complete masters of the business. I do not know whether the counsel who argued before Chitty were all equally capable of using it to the best effect.

There were other judges and leaders familiar to the Bar in my youth and middle age, of whose merits I forbear to speak lest I should become too technical, and others again of whom I have nothing to say, as never having made personal acquaintance with them. Bramwell, indeed, was once in my rooms at Cambridge before my law studies began, for a reason that seems hardly credible in the twentieth century. In the last year of Whewell's reign as Master of Trinity my grandfather and Bramwell came to Cambridge as judges of assize, and according to custom put up in Trinity Lodge, where tobacco was strictly forbidden. So it came to pass that one evening the Chief Baron brought Bramwell across the Great Court to smoke a cigar in my rooms; I remember him as bluff and cheerful. The next time I was

at all near him was when, ten years later, he took part, in the Court of Appeal, in reversing a decision in my client's favour against a railway company. He notoriously thought railway companies needed protection against juries; I had a feeble leader and Benjamin was against us, so our fate was pretty well sealed: not that I can say the Court of Appeal went wrong on the law. Bramwell was an individualist according to the straitest sect of the old 'philosophical Radicals,' and constantly insisted on the importance of every man being expected to look out for himself. I have elsewhere noted the influence of that school on our nineteenth-century jurisprudence.

Of Lord Justice James, whom I did know at home, I may say that his judgments, hardly inferior to Jessel's in learning and acuteness, were much more elegant in form. Some passages deserve to be classical: this paragraph for example, quoted by me long since in a professional work, on the limits of reasonableness in complaints of nuisance:

It would have been wrong, as it seems to me, for this Court, in the reign of Henry VI, to have interfered with the further use of sea coal in London, because it had been ascertained to their satisfaction, or predicted to their satisfaction, that in the reign of Queen Victoria both white and red roses would have ceased to bloom in the Temple Gardens. If some picturesque haven opens its arms to invite the commerce of the world, it is not for this Court to forbid the embrace, although the fruit of it should be the sights, and sounds, and smells of a common seaport and shipbuilding town, which would drive the Dryads and their masters from their ancient solitudes. . . . A man to whom Providence has given an estate, under

which there are veins of coal worth perhaps hundreds or thousands of pounds per acre, must take the gift with the consequences and concomitants of the mineral wealth in which he is a participant.

Once I heard from James a vigorous epithet which did not appear in the report ; he was censuring the conduct of a trustee who had been making illicit gains at the expense of young people confiding in him, and rolled out with a certain unctiousness the words ' omnivorous cupidity.' As to his personal appearance it is enough to say (he reported it himself) that as he sat waiting for a train at some station in the Rhine country one porter observed to another ' Da sitzt ein Falstaff.' But the Lord Justice had a touch of Falstaff's humour as well as the likeness of his bulk, which was more than the porter could know. He was much liked by the Bar ; I remember that once on a route march the Inns of Court Corps met him driving, and the commanding officer halted the column and ordered a general salute. That salute may or may not have been strictly proper according to military regulations. It brings me, however, to the subject of the Inns of Court Regiment, at first I.C.R.V. later I.C.O.T.C. In the days when volunteer regiments were formed all over the country to resist the first Napoleon's threatened invasion the legal profession was well represented. Members of the Inns were numerous in two distinct bodies, the Law Association and the Bloomsbury and Inns of Court Association : it was on the Temple companies of the former that King George III bestowed the name of The Devil's Own as

related on the authority, it seems, of Erskine, who was in command of them.<sup>1</sup> When the vapouring of Napoleon III's Colonels called forth a second and more durable volunteer service, the Inns of Court men were again among the first to answer. The late Charles Roupell, a learned member of Lincoln's Inn and a friend of my parents, was one of the active promoters, and when I was in the fifth form at Eton he invited my father and me to see the Inns of Court recruits drilling in Gray's Inn Gardens with old ship's muskets fished out of store for the purpose, even as in the Eton School Corps we were drilling with discarded artillery carbines. But I have lived to see an odder thing, English artillery recruits learning to handle their teams with borrowed French guns of an obsolete pattern: this was at Swanage in the first or second year of the Great War. By the way, the shortness of those artillery carbines and the coarseness of their rudimentary sights kept me from discovering the extent of my own myopia until I fired my first rounds of ball cartridge from a long rifle. Spectacles for schoolboys were unthinkable in the 1860's; so it was a shock to me to learn that I could not see the foresight properly, besides having but a hazy view of the target. This last indeed is the lesser trouble. More than ten years later, as an Inns of Court volunteer, I shot through the first-class ranges in company with two much-valued friends now past earthly service. It was

<sup>1</sup> See F. C. Norton, *A Short History of the Military and Naval Services of the Inns of Court, etc.* Lond., 1886, p. 13, quoting Stanhope's *Life of Pitt*.

a misty autumnal morning, the target dim beyond 500 and barely visible at 800 yards. But with autumn fog there goes a dead calm, so there was no wind allowance to think of, and, the range and the direction of the target being given, the main thing was to keep the backsight upright. Anticipating with small arms the methods of modern gunnery, we all scored the points then required for a marksman's badge before we came to 800 yards, and there we left off. Our arm was in those days the Snider, quite capable of good practice up to that distance under favourable conditions; but it was a serious defect for active service that beyond say 600 yards the high trajectory made it a necessary condition that the range should be accurately ascertained. The shooting of the old Enfield was, I think, improved by its conversion to breech-loading. I wonder how many living men remember the muzzle-loading exercise with its quite ingenious arrangement of motions for saving time; the irremediable loss of time was in fumbling with the loose percussion cap, a fact overlooked by some inventors of early breech-loading actions in which it was retained. I incline to think that the merit of single-loading breech-loaders was not so much in the quicker rate of fire as in preserving the general line of sight and the protection of even slight cover during reloading. But this is ancient and mostly forgotten history.

When I took up service in the Inns of Court Corps I was not a raw recruit, having learnt some rudiments at Eton and improved them in the

University Corps at Cambridge. But somehow the first ardour of the Volunteer movement had rather died down at Cambridge, in spite of a particularly good shooting range, and I found a much livelier atmosphere among my new comrades. I joined in 1871, very soon after my call to the Bar, and in the long vacation of that year was one of the company we contributed to a mixed administrative battalion in the first autumn manoeuvres held in this country. The time, only a fortnight, was short for a battalion so formed to learn to work together; the volunteers of those days had no transport or other auxiliary service of their own, nor always clothing fit for camp life—certainly we had to substitute borrowed service great-coats for the inadequate capes which someone had designed for our uniform; and the War Office was still not sure that Volunteers were more than a plaything (with agreeable and not laborious posts for adjutants); and, to our disappointment, the high command would not trust us with outpost duty. But we enjoyed a healthy and active life—happily the weather was fine—and we did learn a good deal: not only the routine of pitching and camp and fatigue duties, but such things not in the books as the use of dry sand for cleaning camp kettles when water is scarce (perhaps not all sand would do, but the Bagshot sand is effective). Moreover, our marching was pretty good before we had done. One day we covered twelve miles in three hours and a half of clear walking: not fast, of course, for an unincumbered small party of tramps, but creditable to a battalion in marching



order. Not that four miles an hour are so easy to keep up even without incumbrances when you come to try it over a known distance. Leslie Stephen could do this without apparent effort ; I have not known many others.

Our operations began in Woolmer Forest and ended, according to the obvious convenience of things, at Aldershot ; it was my first introduction to that delightful range of country. Doubtless there was much fiction about the manœuvres (even now I believe there has to be a little) : the tactics, it was understood, were intended to embody the lessons of the war of 1870 ; but we had learnt through Brewster, our first Colonel in the Inns of Court, that some of those lessons were no news in the quarters where the Peninsular traditions of Wellington's Light Division were preserved. On the last or nearly the last of our field-days we were introduced to a pretty and impressive movement which must now be wholly obsolete, the battalion advancing in line (not extended) with independent fire. It may be doubted whether such firing could ever have done much execution in actual service, but we had ocular proof of the moral effect. Some men of the regiment we were attacking—and they were regulars—were so much excited that they began to fix bayonets in flat defiance of the rules laid down for peace manœuvres, and a mounted staff officer shouted to us to lie down and jumped right over our heads to stop them. Working in double companies (a double company being equivalent to the present company) came in a few years later ;

it was familiar to us before the end of my service, as was the abolition of divers movements, such as the stiff wheel of companies into line, which were dismissed as vanities fit only for the parade ground.

I was an active member of the corps for seven years, and of the School of Arms attached to it much longer, and I have never wholly broken the link, my name being still on a regimental reserve list of honorary members—not involving, in spite of its title, any warranty of continuing fitness for service. Happily for the practical utility of the corps, it became an officers' training corps under Lord Haldane's auspices when he was at the War Office, with a peculiar standing which left its old associations undisturbed ; and when the War came the Inns of Court were ready to do the work for which a corps of liberally educated men is best fitted, namely that of keeping the expanded field army supplied with properly trained officers. It appears from Colonel Errington's record (*The Inns of Court Officers' Training Corps during the Great War*, London, 1922) that it turned out between eleven and twelve thousand officers ; of these more than seven thousand were killed or wounded and nearly three thousand gained war honours. In time of peace the visible establishment of the corps in Lincoln's Inn is on a modest scale enough, but there is no reason to doubt that if the need recurred it would be met as effectually as before.

In one of the last air raids of the War an enemy bomb fell in the middle of the open space in Stone

Buildings, doing little damage beyond breakage of glass. If it had fallen ten or twenty feet more to the eastward, the headquarters of the corps would have been destroyed. Earlier in the War the chapel of Lincoln's Inn had a like escape.

Well, if entry to heaven had to be with some kind of pomp and I were passed as eligible, I think I would choose to march in to our Inns of Court regimental tune of 'Nancy Dawson': provided that my old companions who were Queen Victoria's men would furnish a platoon to march with me, for the blessed Michael or his deputy could not be expected to take the salute of a solitary blank file.

Now I must come back to the works of the law. The Law Reports and their management are of little interest to the lay public. But, inasmuch as they have filled a great part of my life since the Council of Law Reporting created the office of general editor in 1895 and appointed me to fill it, I feel bound to bestow on you, my grandson, the tediousness (even if you find it so) of setting down somewhat about the matter.<sup>1</sup> The decisions of our Superior Courts and the reasons given for them are quite as important for accurate knowledge of our Law as the statutes enacted by the King in Parliament, and, as Lord Lindley wrote nearly half a century ago, 'even Englishmen would think

<sup>1</sup>For the technical details of the present system see, if desired, my paper on 'English Law Reporting,' read before the American Bar Association in 1903, and brought down to date in my *Essays in the Law*, 1922, p. 241; for the earlier history, Lord Lindley in *L.Q.R.* 1. 137.

it strange if there were no authentic publication of Acts of Parliament,' but until the latter half of the nineteenth century the making, issuing and sale of law reports were left to the all but unregulated private enterprise of the law booksellers. Except that the House of Lords appointed official reporters of its own decisions, the only regulations were the refusal of the judges to listen to a report not vouched for by a member of the Bar, and the recognition in each court of a reporter or joint reporters as having a preferential claim to assistance from the judges in the way of revision and information. Such recognition was no warrant for the reports thus authorized being either more punctual (which they were not) or better (which they were not always) than competing ones. And the competition, being within a closed circle of specialists, was so far from being an effectual remedy that on the whole the consumers, namely the body of practising lawyers, lost the advantages of monopoly while they continued to suffer its evils. At last the Bar revolted, and after about a year's discussion the result was that a Council, in effect a joint committee of the Inns of Court and the Law Society, was formed for publishing and supervising a uniform series of reports in all branches of superior jurisdiction. The only official element in the Council of Law Reporting is the addition of the Attorney- and Solicitor-General as *ex officio* members; in point of fact they have no time to attend the Council, and I never heard of the Council consulting them. Somewhat later the Council was incorporated by royal charter, but

so are many institutions and societies which no one would dream of calling official.

Being set on foot, the Council invited the existing 'authorized' reporters to come into the new fold (where, as it turned out, there was better pasture); nearly all of them willingly came, and in the autumn of 1865 the Law Reports got to work. Unity of enterprise had been achieved, but still there was nothing like unity of command. In the House of Lords and the Privy Council the reporters were as independent, for all practical purposes, as before. One editor was appointed to supervise the reports in the Chancery courts, another for those of the courts at Westminster now merged in the High Court of Justice. The Council confined itself to matters of business administration and the appointment of new reporters to fill vacancies, and no provision was made for consultation or communication between the editors. Even certain variations in the style of printing, following former usage, were allowed to continue, and made an unmeaning distinction in the appearance of different series of the Council's publications. (One of my first acts when I became editor was to reduce the style of the Law Reports to uniformity by abolishing the useless italics of the Chancery volumes; incidentally this saved a large sum on the printer's bill.) It speaks well for the force of skilled professional tradition that nearly thirty years elapsed before it was discovered that this divided editorial control was insufficient to secure either uniformity of method or uniform efficiency in all the series. But so it was that in

course of time the Law Reports fell back into the dilatory ways of their predecessors, and several reporters, having no authority over them, also fell into habits of indolence and slovenly work. In some of the reports the head-notes were severely criticized. (You may either know otherwise what a head-note is or not want to know ; but it is, in fact, an introductory summary prefixed to a report for the purpose of giving shortly the legal effect of the decision. The American equivalent ' syllabus ' may be more easily understood by lay people.) Also there were grave complaints of delay. The *Law Quarterly Review*, of which I was the first editor, was then in its infancy ; the discontent widely felt throughout the profession found, in its second number (April 1885) no less an expounder than Lord Justice Lindley, to whom the occasion was given by the late Judge Daniel's *The History and Origin of the Law Reports*. There followed a reply by the editor of the Chancery series of the Law Reports, himself in former days an experienced and esteemed reporter ; he scored on some points, but on the whole was not convincing. A long and desultory campaign of critical notes ensued ; I wrote some of them myself. The Law Reports went on losing credit, and the Council decided, first that unity of command was necessary, and next, on the principle of setting a poacher to be gamekeeper, that I should be the new commanding officer ; and so I was appointed general editor of all the series, and the volumes of 1895 were published, as they have been ever since, uniform in make-up and under a single control.

The Council has been pleased to renew my appointment (all appointments being annual and renewable at the Council's pleasure) from year to year. This is not the place to set forth what I have done or attempted, and how much I have learnt, in an experience now pretty long ; but I may say that one considerable part of my work should have the good wishes of all educated English-speaking people, namely the endeavour to keep bad English out of the Law Reports. This is a harder task than one would think at first sight, for it has to be performed against a persistent enemy, and, what is more, against time. Important judgments are often delivered without having been written, and the shorthand notes (even if free from errors in expansion) abound in colloquial usages, laxly constructed phrases, and repetitions useful in oral delivery but idle in print. Reduction of such passages to an acceptable written style is the aim of a permanent report, but the reporter's and the editor's time barely serve for it. More insidious are the attacks of the jargon which has become a convention of half-educated clerks and second-rate journalists, a jargon which educated persons neither speak nor write, and whose only point appears to be an affectation of solemnity or a pretence of excitement. A flagrant example is the habitual displacement of 'before' by 'prior to,' which means no more, sounds no better, and takes a little longer to say. 'As to whether,' (tolerable only at the opening of a sentence) is another pestilent weed that grows apace. 'Of whether' is only a shade less offensive. There

are other curiosities of this style which happily do not concern law reports ; nowadays, a shot is never fired or heard, but rings out (does a burst tyre ring out likewise ?) ; before long ' ring out ' may be thought an expression exclusively appropriate to fire-arms. Vulgarisms of this nature are very hard to keep out of statements which have to be compiled from correspondence and other papers, mostly having no pretension to be tolerable English. Some learned friends may think me pedantic herein : but I am clearly of opinion that since Blackstone (in Bentham's words) taught our jurisprudence to speak the language of a scholar and a gentleman and a series of accomplished judges have followed the example, it is the duty of the Law Reports not to fall behind. In the days before the War there were scholarly printers' readers quite capable of giving efficient aid to an editor in these matters and even of correcting quotations in foreign tongues. The remnant of their tribe has taken refuge in the University presses and one or two leading London houses.

But what I have to say here of my occupation in editing the Law Reports is that it has been of the greatest value in keeping me in living touch with practising leaders of the profession. This advantage outweighs all the wearisome floundering through amorphous masses of inevitable but unprofitable decisions on Workmen's Compensation, Local Government, Revenue, and (worst of all) Rent Restriction Acts. But for the Law Reports, indeed, I can hardly suppose that I should ever have been a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn. It is



certain that in that position I have much readier access to information and learned opinion on the questions constantly arising in the course of the business of the Law Reports than I should have outside it. The mere saving of time in being able to speak with judges and counsel without written correspondence is considerable ; it may even make a month's difference in the publication of a report.

A few words must be given to the Selden Society, in whose work I have taken an active interest ever since it was founded, Maitland being the chief promoter, in 1887. Its declared purpose is to advance the knowledge and to encourage the study of the history of English law, a purpose which is in a steady course of execution by the issue to the Society's members of hitherto unpublished material, and in particular, though by no means exclusively, of the medieval law reports known since the sixteenth century as ' Year Books.' The Society has been fortunate in finding learned and skilled editors, among them Maitland himself, Vinogradoff, and the late Dr. Bolland, who made the Year Books his speciality, and its publications are appreciated by students of medieval institutions in their political and economic aspects no less fully than by scholarly lawyers. Probably this is the only country in the world where such work is wholly left to private enterprise : it is true that welcome aid is forthcoming from the governing bodies of our profession, but after all they are by origin private societies. It would be out of place here to say anything about the contents of these publications except one volume

which was outside the regular series and distinguished by a different size, namely the edition of Selden's *Table Talk*, from a long unknown MS. belonging to Lincoln's Inn, which it fell to my lot, as being the Society's literary director, to produce in 1927. Accurate reproduction of the text, a decidedly better one than any of those used or consulted by former editors, was a rather anxious job even with the aid of a skilled copyist, but, Selden's *Table Talk* having long been a favourite book of mine, it was on the whole a labour of love. I fear it is a prevalent notion even among educated readers that the book is only a good collection of sayings and anecdotes. Of course it is that, and for that quality Dr. Johnson praised it warmly notwithstanding the gulf between Selden's opinions and his own in matters of Church and State ; but it is much more, and deserves all the critical attention due to a classic—the more so because in the common printed text several passages are imperfect or little better than nonsense.

Some of my learned friends of early Lincoln's Inn days, and one specially intimate friend, turned away from ordinary professional practice and used their learning in other ways, directly or indirectly, with great profit to the public and the world of letters. But of these—James Bryce, Courtenay Ilbert, F. W. Maitland—I have said above or elsewhere, what I could say<sup>1</sup> ; and I will only add here that, widely as their work differed in character and scope (though Bryce's and Maitland's had points of contact), it all agreed in being thoroughly sound

<sup>1</sup> See note to Dedication, p. xv above.

and accurate ; and for this I think their professional training may claim some credit.

## § II. THE LAW BEYOND SEAS

The tag about not knowing England if one knows only England is somewhat musty, but that does not alter the truth in it, and there is no part of English life to which it is more applicable than the power and influence of the Common Law. The ideas, methods, and terms of our law have directed or guided the course of justice in lands far beyond the jurisdictions in which it is formally supreme. Conspicuous among its achievements, but by no means alone, is its expansion across the continent of North America both in the Dominion of Canada and in the United States. In the words written by my dear friend and colleague, Maitland, as the last sentence of our joint book on the early history of English law,

Those few men who were gathered at Westminster round Pateshull and Raleigh and Bracton were penning writs that would run in the name of kingless commonwealths on the other shore of the Atlantic Ocean ; they were making right and wrong for us and for our children.

Almost from the beginning of my legal studies I took a special interest in the fortunes of English law beyond seas, and especially in America ; that interest was confirmed and encouraged by my friendship with Holmes, who has now quitted the bench of the Supreme Court at Washington after a long and brilliant judicial career, a friendship which began when I was very young at the Bar ; my election, a dozen years later, to the chair of

historical and comparative jurisprudence at Oxford made the following of my predilection a duty. Opportunity for visiting our brethren of the Common Law beyond the ocean came in unofficial and unexpected fashion. In that very year, 1883, I had written an article on Dartmoor for the *English Illustrated Magazine*, in whose volumes the historian of English wood engraving may still find good material in your time: the publishers, my constant friends in letters the Macmillans, were acquainted with Lucius O'Brien, a Canadian artist who did not himself engrave but had supervised the production of a large illustrated work on Canada and knew all about wood engraving and how to draw for the engraver; O'Brien was on a visit to England, and in the west, and the publishers invited him to illustrate my paper. So it came about that one day in the summer holidays we met on the moor above Tavistock, and I think we were already friends before our first parting. And another day, not long after, O'Brien proposed to your grandmother and me that the next year we should go out to Canada, and in his company see more of its beauties than travellers commonly see—or at any rate could easily see without guidance half a century ago. We were doubtful at first; we had never been so far or so long from home, and your father was not yet of school age; but it was too good a chance to miss, and we went. In another chapter I will tell you how we canoed up and down the St. Maurice river in the Province of Quebec, then frequented only by lumbermen and Catholic missionary priests. What is now to

the purpose is that we had also made acquaintance with William James, the philosopher, in England, and under his auspices we passed from a series of transitory camps in Canada to the hospitality of a stationary though not permanent New England camp in the Adirondacks and to more durable habitations of new American friends at Boston and Cambridge (Massachusetts), whereby I learnt something about the law school of Harvard University and the new life that Langdell, with Thayer and Ames as his right-hand men, was putting into it. I came away having made friends with them all, and firmly convinced that Langdell's method of teaching law by direct study of the authorities was in principle sound and already being justified by the results. It is harder, of course, for the teacher than lecturing and examining on text-books; the right way of doing most things is harder at the beginning. For the learner it may or may not be the readiest way to pass examinations, but I am sure it is the best way to learn law. Here I am repeating the words I used in Langdell's presence after ten years' acquaintance. How I came to speak them was that in 1895 the Harvard Law School Association made its usual summer commemoration meeting the occasion for a special celebration of Langdell's silver wedding with the school, and did me the singular honour of inviting me to give the opening address. I may now add that Langdell's method was one in spirit, though it had to be clothed in its own modern apparel, with the system by which our professional learning and traditions were created in the Inns of Court.

Constant discussion, informal talk as well as formal debate and argument, was the way of our ancestors. It was in essence the method of the medieval universities adapted to the special needs of law students. To us, with printed books of reference at our elbow, the moots and exercises of our ancestors look as if they had been wasteful of time. We forget that before the day of printing, and even in its earlier days when books were still few and dear, every student had to carry a condensed library of reference in his head : for the humanist, this was the grammar and a sufficient vocabulary of the learned languages ; for the lawyer, all the legal doctrine he would be called upon to know in daily practice, reinforced and kept up to date by a commonplace book which he made for himself. It was not our medieval ancestors' fault that their descendants went on blindly copying the letter of their methods without considering the spirit ; and their fault after the confusion of the Civil War had broken up their studies for a generation was not that they failed to revive the obsolete letter but that they did not address themselves to clothing the spirit in a practical modern form. Things went much the same way in the universities, except that the ghosts of the old forms walked more openly in the shape of nominal disputations which had long been mere shams. That visit to Harvard in 1895 brought me into more and closer touch with American learned friends than I had enjoyed before, and particularly Langdell, the hero of the occasion, Ames, who succeeded him at the head of the law school, and my

still living friend Justice Holmes, then on the judicial bench of his own State.

Later, in 1903, I extended my knowledge of American law schools by a fairly long summer lecturing tour, and also learnt the difference between American and English (I rather think not Scottish) audiences. Lectures, taken all round, pass on the whole, in England, for a rather dull kind of intellectual entertainment. The reason, I believe, is that at most public lectures there is in the audience, a chill and fusty lump, or scattered lumps, of people who have come not because they know or really want to know anything of the subject but because they obscurely believe that going to lectures, in and for itself, somehow does them good—or perhaps want their neighbours to respect them as lettered and intelligent persons because they are seen to attend lectures. There was no such element in the American audiences I had the pleasure of addressing. Not all of those young men and women, it may be presumed, pursued their legal studies with any lasting effect. Some of them may have been engaged, quite reasonably, in choosing what line of study they would pursue. But in any case they were genuinely interested in the subject for the time being, and followed the lecture with alert intelligence. They came by their own choice and of their own will to learn what they could, not because their tutors had told them they might pick up something that would pay them in the next examination. Lecturing to an older audience, I admit, may be a different matter. The audience

of the Lowell lectures at Boston is really formidable, a judicial and critical audience, quite as alert as the younger folk, but severely reserved until it has made up its mind. For the first ten minutes of my first Lowell lecture I had no kind of indication of the impression I was making. One could only see that the hearers were not asleep but very much awake. Were they going to throw things at me, or what? Such is the preliminary trial a lecturer to that very select audience has to face. If he can pass it without losing his courage he will have nothing to complain of afterwards. Besides my experience of law schools in America I have been enabled to make some acquaintance with practising leaders of the Bar there. Three times I have had the pleasure of attending meetings of the American Bar Association, a body which has done singularly good work in promoting uniformity of commercial law among nearly fifty distinct jurisdictions, and keeping a high standard of professional competence and character before their various and mixed populations. My first visit was in the delightful surroundings of Hot Springs, Virginia, in 1903, before I started on a lecturing tour; the second at Portland, Maine, in 1907, in Lord Bryce's company; the third in 1909, at Detroit. Not to speak of the private hospitality I enjoyed before, during and after those meetings, I was much impressed both by the efficient management of the business and by the excellence of the speaking alike at business meetings and at banquets. One of the best speeches I have ever heard was made by the Governor of Virginia, Mr.



Montague, at Hot Springs. There were plenty of people then and for some years later who remembered the Civil War ; I have indeed heard veterans of both sides compare notes, and their stories—even if one or two had improved in the telling—were well told. On this occasion Governor Montague spoke of the history of his own State, on his own soil and in frank vindication of Virginia's honourable sons who had felt bound to put loyalty to their own State first ; he spoke with feeling and eloquence and yet with such tact and courtesy that none of the many Northerners present could take offence.

At Portland, Maine, under a State prohibition law which purported to forbid the sale but could not, under the Constitution as it then stood, forbid the importation of alcoholic liquor, neither the American nor the local Bar Association found any difficulty in exhibiting a considerable variety of such liquors to their members and guests ; moreover, I saw a man openly and all but helplessly drunk on the public sea front in full daylight. It is said that such things might lately be seen in cities greater than Portland even under the more drastic rule of the Eighteenth Amendment, now moribund.

At Detroit your father was with me renewing some of his Harvard acquaintances, and we tasted the pleasures of being put up at an American country club, of which excellent bathing was one. At that meeting I got some further light on the prohibition controversy from a discussion between a Rhode Island and an Alabama lawyer, who

did not take the sides a stranger would have expected. The New Englander was all for the liberty of the citizen and the Southerner for restriction chiefly on the ground, which he frankly avowed, that he saw no other way to keep the negroes in order.

I am free to confess that both the motives and the enjoyment of my visit to the American Bar Association were to a large extent outside professional interests; and in like manner my last crossing of the Atlantic in 1930 was prompted by the reflection that it was probably my last chance of seeing some old friends face to face. By the time when you are old enough to read these lines it may have become common knowledge in Europe that travellers who see only the great American cities will learn very little about American life. Not only New York is not America, nor even an epitome of America, but Boston is not New England, though it retains much more local character. The same kind of warning is indeed more or less applicable to all capitals, though to London less than most, England being a country of moderate size, and geographical and political conditions having combined to make London a great house of call.

In 1904 I took part in one professional function overseas which for the visitors was all play and no work. This was the celebration in Paris of the centenary of the Code Civil. The date fell out propitiously for the delegates of the English Bar, who were Mackenzie Chalmers, Courtenay Ilbert and myself. After years of bickering between

France and our country the Entente had been concluded, and it was just bearing fruit ; the Dogger Bank incident, which not many days before had seemed to threaten the peace of Europe, was already put in a way of arbitral settlement through the prompt good offices of the French Government. So we could be quite at ease with our Parisian hosts and thoroughly enjoy their hospitality. At the formal meeting in the Sorbonne there was an odd incident ; a feminist lady raised a cry of ' *À bas le code ! le code déshonore les femmes !* ' but she left the hall without any disturbance and proceeded to the Place Vendôme with certain like-minded companions and a copy of the Code Civil. This they would have burnt at the foot of Napoleon's statue, but on being informed that lighting fires in public places was forbidden, contented themselves with tearing it up. Nothing more came of this protest. Perhaps the most curious sight for us Englishmen was Sir Edward Fry in the seat of state on the platform, wearing the full dress of a Privy Councillor and thereby doubly defying, by the sword and the conspicuous gold lace, the rules of the Society of Friends. Perhaps there was some kind of informal dispensation.

In these memories of professional wanderings I have spared you many particulars which, to make them intelligible twenty years hence, would need a weight of explanation too heavy for them to carry. But I have given you just enough to refute the notion current among the lay people that the law is a dull and sedentary business and lawyers see the world only through professional spectacles.

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CHAPTER VI  
TRAVEL AND RECREATION

SOME people are born travellers, being moved by an active curiosity to be always exploring some part of the world outside their own familiar region. The most perfect example I have known in that kind was James Bryce. Others dislike the actual business of travelling, though at a journey's end they may find pleasure in the view of men and cities and the works of man and nature. Others again, among whom I count myself, like travel but have to be content with taking it as occasions may bring it. I have no ancestral tradition; my mother was a good traveller, my father was not, my grandfather belonged to a generation which, being debarred from going beyond seas during the Napoleonic wars, hardly thought of it. To the best of my belief he crossed the Channel once and only once in his life. My mother was taken in her youth on a sort of revived Grand Tour of the eighteenth-century fashion, and saw something of Italy. One of her memories was that at a small town the answer to an inquiry whether there was any news was: 'Niente, Signora, nientissimo. È rivoluzione.' (So in Monaco, about a century later.) On the same or a like occasion, when the party com-

plained that no attention was being paid to their wants, they received this reply: 'Che vuole? Non c'è più camera, non c'è più pranzo, non c'è più niente: tutto è amore e libertà!' (not much amiss at this day for summing up much talk of good people who ingeminate Peace and Disarmament without producing any tangible results). One way and another your grandmother and I, looking back on our travelling days which are now done, may claim a fair acquaintance, as holiday journeys go, with the generally known parts of Europe from the Baltic to the Mediterranean: besides which she has been up the Nile without me and I have been to India without her. She was there long before me, however, for she was born in Calcutta. (Some years ago we hoped to revisit India, for which I had arranged a special winter leave of absence, but when our plans were all made an unfortunate accident upset them.) We saw something of North America too, from canoeing in the Province of Quebec in 1884 to an academic meeting at Columbia University in 1930, when we found New York wholly transformed since our first view of it long before skyscrapers were born.

I shall not inflict upon you, my grandson, a dose of potted diaries or diluted guide-book. The ground we covered in our journeys extending over about half a century is for the most part well enough known and, what is more, well described by various authors of repute. Neither shall I pause on regrets for the things we dreamt of doing and but for the Great War might well have done

—such as revisiting Spain and in particular the Alhambra, and improving our acquaintance with Italy, as to which we have compromised with one return to Venice and a few landings in the course of Mediterranean cruises, just a glimpse of the new Fascist order and discipline.

But it so happened that the first of our longer expeditions was quite out of the common run then, and I doubt whether the St. Maurice River is much frequented by holiday-makers now, since the Shawinigan Falls have become a centre of water-power and paper manufacture. How we came to go there has been mentioned in the last chapter. With our friend Lucius O'Brien the painter we spent three happy weeks canoeing up and down that river, which flows into the St. Lawrence at Three Rivers, about half-way between Quebec and Montreal. It was a real camping holiday, quite cut off from city life and occupations; our address for the time being was 'up river.' We carried our own tents and camped out every night but one, and of that exception we repented. Our professional attendants—hardly guides, for they knew very little about that particular river—were three French-Canadian *voyageurs*, in English lumbermen, good fellows and steady workers, much the same kind of stuff that guides are made of in mountain countries. They had English enough to get on with but preferred French—a provincial French rather impoverished in vocabulary, it seemed to me. But the relation of the two tongues in the Province of Quebec is a rather perplexed matter. At

Ottawa and there only, unless things have changed for the better at Montreal, one may find a really bilingual company. Sir Wilfrid Laurier had a perfect command of both languages, though he was quite capable of diplomatic silence too. There were only scattered farms along the St. Maurice River in those days, and the Shawinigan Falls—not of the Niagara kind, but a series of great rapids—were in a state of untouched wild nature. Below the rapids the river, after rushing through a narrow defile, spread out into a spacious pool, almost a lake, where the open shore afforded excellent camping ground. I think it was on that shore that a bittern standing on a stone took no notice of our approach till the bows of our canoe were within a foot or two of him. I know not how much of the natural features of the river may be recognizable since the transformation effected by the recent industrial works.

Our canoes were of the primitive birch-bark type, seemingly fragile, but the small rents constantly inflicted on them by touching rocks were easily mended with the gum liberally supplied by the Canadian balsam fir. Lightness was essential, for canoes and baggage had frequently to be carried over portages to circumvent rapids which could not be navigated. The carriage of a birch-bark canoe is quite simple: inverted over a man's head it is no great load, though it makes the man look like some strange new species of snail. Length of portages may be anything from a few hundred feet to two miles or more, according to the interval between the navigable reaches, and

the rate of progress on land depends on the state of the path. It may be as easy going as on a cart track, or there may be only a trail through the undergrowth—for portage is almost always through a wood—so faintly marked that it is easier to feel than to see. Conditions of this kind vary with the liveliness or otherwise for the time being of the local lumber trade. Paddling a canoe with a single paddle is mechanically less efficient than rowing, but less fatiguing, and it can be kept up all day. Steering is much quicker and handier than any one who has not learnt the trick would think.

The delights of camping are now, I believe, more widely known than they were half a century ago,—thanks, among other reasons, to the discipline of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides—and in a certain measure they are uniform. But a real camp-fire can be enjoyed only where wood is plentiful. On the banks of a Canadian river you may pile up logs and stumps—often of drift wood lying ready to hand—with no cost and small labour. Besides the cheerful warmth and glow, and the flights of sparks almost as good as fireworks, the camp-fire is a powerful defence against insects. Not that mosquitos ought to be in force after July, but in an exceptional season they may be, and that summer they were; likewise black-flies, sluggish little creatures who stroll over your face and stop now and then to take a bite; finally the sand-flies, invisible to the naked eye, who make their presence felt like a shower of hot needles, but happily do not pass through a mos-



quito net and occur only in patches. Lumbermen working in the forest fill their boots with sawdust and protect their faces with a mixture of tar and oil, unless they have discovered something better in the course of the last half-century.

There were later and, for me, longer visits to Canada ; in 1905 I went right across to Victoria, B.C., not on pleasure bent but with much incidental pleasure, and in 1903 enjoyed the hospitality of Osgoode Hall at Toronto (the nearest analogy to our Inns of Court beyond seas), including the use of its excellent law library for preparing the lectures I was about to deliver in American law schools. All this was good, but the adventure of the St. Maurice River remains unique in memory.

English travellers talk about change of air even within the four seas, but when they go farther think of the climate too much in terms of heat and cold and fail to appreciate the real change from our island damp to the clear atmosphere of North American summer (perhaps even better in early autumn) with its invigorating brilliance. At home, for one thing, we do not know what starlight is. The like delight may be found in the north of India in the winter months, which reminds me that forty years ago I drove to the railway at Jaipur for departure by an early morning train, under a marvellous star-spangled sky, in company with Don Jaime of Bourbon's equerry, an agreeable Austrian officer. (That prince was then a rather bumptious young man, globe-trotting ; he professed to think he ought to be King of both France and Spain.) To my

surprise I found that the Austrian's military training had not included learning to know one star from another. When I showed him the Pole Star he asked whether it was always in the same place. We were talking German, and I did not know the proper term for the precession of the equinoxes, nor could have undertaken in any case to explain it; so I answered cautiously that for common purposes he might assume the Pole Star's position to be constant. I must not omit the praise of the Eastern Mediterranean atmosphere, which does not come far behind. In the golden days of Athens the Athenians claimed to have the very best of it ('ever walking delicately,' as Euripides's chorus sang, 'in the brightest of air' <sup>1</sup>). From my own observation during hours happily spent on the Acropolis I think the boast was justified.

Nothing could well be more different from my first journey across the Atlantic, in respect of climate and otherwise, than my second, which was not to North America but to the corner of the South American continent, cut off before the beginning of human history, which we know as the Island of Trinidad. First, the sun and blue sea of the South Atlantic instead of the grey, not often sunny, not seldom foggy, and usually rather cold North Atlantic weather. Then a glimpse of West Indian early summer, in a leisurely voyage from Barbados touching at the lesser Windward

<sup>1</sup> Med. 829. Verrall's note on the peculiar flavour of Ionian luxury conveyed by ἀβρωγός, a word seldom used in a good sense, is interesting.

Islands; but in Trinidad a premature rainy season and two months' hard work therein with my senior commissioner, Sir William Markby (formerly a judge of the Calcutta High Court), and, as our secretary, my junior, Sir Harry Wilson (as he now is, happily still with us after a long career of good service to the Empire). If you want to know what it felt like, try working against time in a hot-house dripping with warm water. Our commission to report on the justice administered by the Supreme Court of the colony is probably forgotten even on the spot by this time. Its results were drastic and, it is believed, beneficial; some of the facts we verified were odd enough to be quite comical in the eyes of English lawyers. You, my grandson, may have to learn sooner or later that the verification even of notorious facts is extremely difficult in a small and isolated society whose members, split up into sections, for the most part live in a state of mutual distrust. In one case of a quite public scandal we should have despaired of knowing with judicial certainty what really happened, but for the clear witness of three sturdy farmers who had lately come out from Lincolnshire and spoke without fear or favour. To return to the climate, it is practically equatorial but likewise insular; the heat is tempered by sea breeze and sunstroke is unknown; till the present year the same might be said of hurricanes, and it may be a long time before there is another. The monotony of punctual six o'clock sunset with no twilight is tedious to northern men: night comes down with a run,

'*der Vorhang fällt rasch*' according to the Wagnerian stage direction, thousands of unseen frogs and toads croaking an accompaniment. But occasional fine days were a compensation. When they happened, the junior commissioner and the secretary walked in defiance of local custom, under a limpid blue sky, admiring the tropical vegetation and the flowering forest trees. By great good fortune we even ascended the nearest thing to a mountain we could find, Tucuche in the northern hills: nothing Alpine about it of course; instead of snow there was mud, and there was indeed cutting not of steps but with *machetes* to clear a way through the bush. When we did come out at the top the freshness of the air (at the height of 3,100 feet, quite enough to make a difference) and the absence of mosquitos were sufficient reward for the labour.<sup>1</sup>

But mention of Tucuche (which is not in the nature of a peak at all but only the highest point in a ridge) brings me to the remembrance of real mountains. Except my friend O. W. Holmes, now an honorary member, originally elected in 1866, one year before me, I seem to be the oldest member of the Alpine Club, so my alpine days belong to the ancient history of modern mountaineering. The heroic age of the Club was just at its end when my brother Walter and I were elected on a qualification which at this day would be ludicrously insufficient. It consisted of making a little pass, then new, through a narrow gap

<sup>1</sup> Particulars may be seen, if desired, in the *Alpine Journal*, xvi, 349.

between the Glacier du Tour and the Glacier de Saleinaz, now known as the Fenêtre du Tour, under the guidance of François Couttet (*dit* Baguette) who had had his eye on it for some time ; it is not difficult in fine weather but was good training for novices (*A.J.*, iv, 60 ; Ball's *Western Alps*, ed. 1898, 392). Chamonix was then still rustic, and we lodged with Baguette. That was my first introduction to real glacier work. It so fell out that my latest expedition above the snow line also had an element of novelty. In 1886 your grandmother and I had a mighty pleasant holiday in the Stubai Thal in Tirol, with my friend and contemporary A. J. Butler of Trinity (known to the world as a Dante scholar) ; our headquarters were at the village of Mieders. On August 10, starting from the higher village of Ranalt, we went up the Wilder Freiger at the head of the valley, and came down by a variation which looked so obvious on the map that we never thought it could be new : but in the course of the descent our guide casually remarked that he thought no one had taken that route before, and it turned out to be the fact (*A.J.*, xiii, 127). The guide's name was Sebastian Reinalter : he had never been with English travellers before. Two things about us, he said, surprised him ; one was how fast we walked, the other how little we ate. It did not seem to occur to him that there might be some connection between those facts. The Austrian Tirol is still, I believe, a delightful resort for mountain lovers who do not care for the bustle of the climbing centres, or whose days

of strenuous expeditions are over, and I suppose the charm of simple manners is there still. Half a century ago the common form of salutation 'Grüss Gott' had not quite superseded a fuller one, 'Gelobt sei Jesus Christus,' answered with 'In Ewigkeit': a response which not only an orthodox Christian but any open-minded follower of any spiritual leader more tolerant than Nietzsche might surely make with a good conscience.

As to the bulk of my Alpine experience, it includes no special achievement, some climbs which the state of the elements made harder than they should have been, and one or two failures due to the same cause. The whole amount would at this day barely suffice (if at all) to qualify a candidate. Contrary to a report once current, the standard of what the committee should accept has never been defined. Once in my time a motion was made to fix it, and rejected by a considerable majority at a general meeting: I was one of those who opposed, for the reason that definition would only prevent the standard from being raised in future according to the improvement to be expected in the average competence of amateur climbers, and it would rise well enough of itself if officially left alone. The event proved us right. As I understand the present unwritten practice, the candidate must have served three seasons' apprenticeship in pretty serious mountaineering, and not all in the same district. My own full seasons were in 1868 and 1872. In the earlier of these I became fairly intimate with the Bernese Oberland; an

attempt on the Gspaltenhorn, then still unconquered, seemed to promise well, but the rocks were covered with snow not yet consolidated; 'there was much fresh snow in very bad condition, and the stones were frozen hard together beneath it' (*A.J.*, iv, 157): and my guides, after reconnaissance, reported that certainly we could get up, but as to coming down the result was wholly uncertain; 'gottbekannt' was the only judgment possible. By way of a little consolation we saw a whole herd of chamois, a sight less common than you might think. The conquest of the peak was achieved in the following year, not without difficulty, by G. E. Foster (*A.J.*, iv, 382).

Another ascent nearly spoilt by the caprices of snowfall was that of the Eiger. The summit is reached by a pure snow arête, taking normally about three-quarters of an hour, and giving no trouble and not much labour of step-cutting to a party knowing its business. But this time the former snow had frozen into hard ice, and the latter snow lying over it was quite loose. The only way was to clear off the snow and cut steps in the hard ice: they had to be large steps, for in case of a slip there was nothing whatever to stop the fall, the snow being too powdery and the ice too solid for an ice-axe to take hold. So the leading guide said very firmly that there must not be a slip. We completed the ascent after three hours of hard and anxious work, and were rewarded by a grand view, but the wind was too cold for any stay. The descent of the ridge was made in about half the time by the steps already

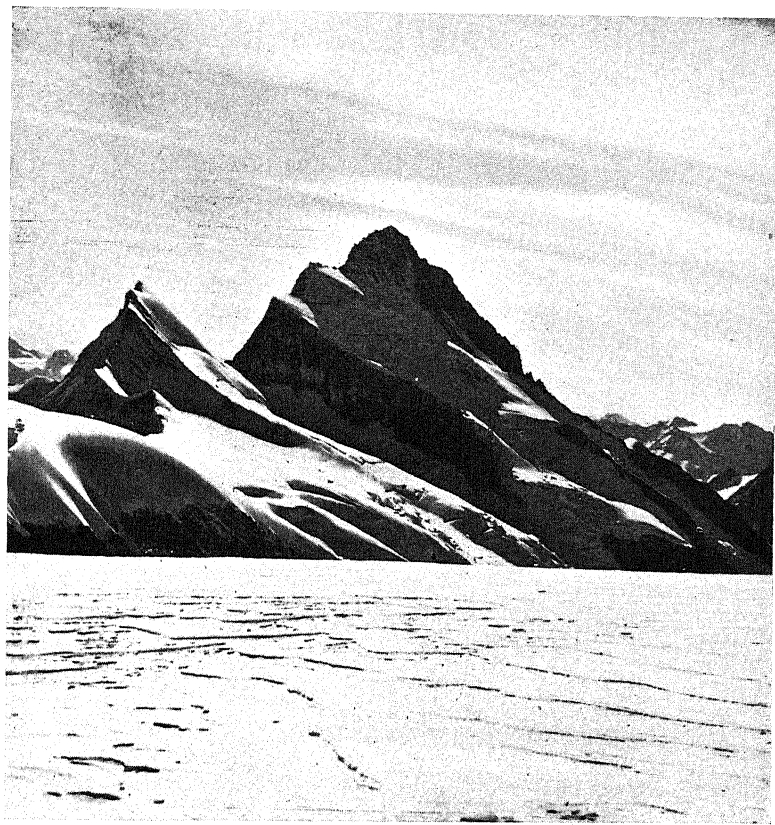
cut, but with extreme caution. Peter Rubi and Peter Baumann agreed that the snow could not have been worse: 'Er kann nicht böser sein.' I think a larger party could not have carried on without unjustifiable risk.

In August 1872 I had a good time both of real climbs and of minor rambles and scrambles, mostly with Walter Leaf and J. H. Pratt, and Peter Baumann of Grindelwald as chief guide; he lived to a good old age and was commemorated in the *Alpine Journal* only a few years ago. Our most ambitious expedition was an attempt to make a new route up the north side of the Aletschhorn; it seemed practicable, but was clearly too long to be completed in the day's work, so that all we accomplished was a variation upon the Dreieckhorn (*A.J.*, vi, 147). In the course of the day, while we were going along a pretty steep snow crest, an indifferent sort of second guide whom we had picked up said the most foolish thing I have ever heard a guide say: being in front of me he turned round and asked: 'Haben Sie Schwindel?'—a sure and certain way to demoralize a traveller if his head was not proof. Happily I could answer with a blunt negative; I always felt more at ease on a ridge with a drop on both sides than on a ledge with a wall on one side and a drop on the other. The same man had, the day before, spoilt our plan for using the Agassizjoch as a new way of descent from the Finsteraarhorn; the traverse in that direction was made by another party a few weeks later with no trouble (*A.J.*, vi, 146). Baumann was quite prepared to lead us, but this



dull fellow jibbed (here I repeat in part what I said in a memorial note on Walter Leaf, *A.J.*, xxxix, 124). He insisted that the party of two guides and three pretty fit travellers was not strong enough, so we had to go back to the Faulberg, as the mulish guide who thought he knew better than Peter Baumann obviously could not be marooned. Those were the days when mountaineering flourished in the Universities. One night there were together at the Eggischhorn no fewer than seven actual or future Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge. They were also the days when alpine huts were still few and sleeping out in caves, even on the way to well-known peaks and passes, was quite in the regular course.

My last day of that season was in one way the best. Having parted from Leaf and Pratt at the Eggischhorn, I crossed the Jungfrauoch to Grindelwald, taking it in the reverse of the usual direction and descending the great ice-fall; the magnificent variety of its séracs is, I should think, unsurpassed in the Alps. It is essential to make an early start and go fast enough to be through the ice-fall before the sun has time to loosen any fragments. With that precaution there is no danger, and, with Peter Baumann, now an old friend, and Peter Schlegel as my guides, I could enjoy this grand piece of ice-work in perfect confidence. I cannot find that these séracs have ever been photographed; there might be difficulties about it. We made good time and were at Grindelwald before noon, where I fell in again with Leaf. The next day I saw Baumann and his family at home,



THE FINSTERAARHORN

*By courtesy of A. Zürcher.*



and such was my fitting farewell to the Bernese Oberland. Of the peaks with which I made acquaintance I think the hardest was the Schreckhorn, not because there are any specially difficult places under normal conditions but because there are no easy ones ; the rocks of the final climb are sound gneiss with safe holding everywhere. Note, my grandson, that the infallible warning of a hard spell coming is when the leading guide puts out his pipe.

The peculiar charm of Alpine heights has been recorded and celebrated by many writers. Conrad Gesner of Zürich, to whom I tried to do justice in the historical chapter of the volume on mountaineering in the Badminton series, was, I think, the first. He and Josias Simler, had it been a more peaceful world at the opening of the Reformation troubles, might have founded a school of Alpine exploration in the sixteenth century. Modern testimonies are too numerous to mention. But the compound of bodily and spiritual well-being that rewards the devout mountaineer defies description and analysis alike. If there is any parallel, it is in the call of the sea. Man can adore and observe the starry heavens ; he can expand his vision and his knowledge of them from the celestial sphere, as it appeared to our remote forefathers, to a universe of distances and velocities which he measures in terms definable by reason but transcending imagination ; but the more he learns of the stars the remoter from his earthly life they become. The heavens declare the glory of God, saith the Psalmist—but without intimacy. The

mountains and the ocean are of man's own world, they are living powers for delight, for contest, for conquest, and for love. *Levavimus oculos ad montes.*

Active climbing, in any case, cannot be pursued beyond the days of middle age. The rarefied atmosphere above ten or twelve thousand feet puts extra work on the lungs and heart which a young man is hardly aware of, but the strain of climbing becomes serious for a man of over or near fifty. Beyond that age he must look for some form of exercise not calling for prolonged effort; it may safely be intense for a short spell, but not continuous.

Accordingly the recreation which has stood by me longest is fencing. I am old enough in my devotion to it to have taken lessons in Paris in the last days of the Second Empire, when it was the pastime of a mere handful of amateurs in England, and had no recognized place in our world of sports. As late as 1884 Egerton Castle could write:

Since the last [eighteenth] century there have been in England, and there are still, many masters of note, but the art of the sword, in all its branches, is now so generally neglected, that schools purely devoted to fencing are excessively few. Swordsmanship is in most cases looked upon as a corollary to gymnastics, and a comparatively unimportant one;

and the passage was reprinted without change in 1892, though it was already pretty near being obsolete.<sup>1</sup>

So long as a sword was part of a gentleman's

<sup>1</sup> *Schools and Masters of Fence*, 2nd ed., p. 311: the first edition is dated 1885, but the preface appears by internal evidence to have been written in 1884.

everyday costume the wearer was expected to know something about the act of using it. When the walking sword went out of fashion towards the end of the eighteenth century, it was a natural consequence that fencing ceased to be a regular part of a gentleman's accomplishments. Duelling indeed was not extinct, but in England and Ireland the pistol had already supplanted the sword as the usual weapon. When the duel finally disappeared, it made no difference to the pastime of fencing; in like manner the reduction of the sword to insignificance in modern war actually coincided with a rapid development of interest in sabre play. The decline of fencing in the first half of the nineteenth century requires no further explanation, but it is remarkable that the London Fencing Club was founded by a group of officers, especially of the Guards, in 1848, just when the prospect of a revival was at its darkest.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the materials for revival were there all the time, though more or less latent. The school of arms founded by Domenico Angelo about 1760 survived the period of obscurity, so there was no break in the succession of English masters or masters practising in England. During my time at Eton the last of the Angelos was giving lessons there as well as at other schools, under difficulties as to the time available and otherwise, as was the case with 'extras' generally. I think the lessons were old-fashioned and rather perfunctory and the results

<sup>1</sup> A concise but adequate historical account of the club, written by my son with access to its archives, appeared in the *Field* of May 3, 1923.

not important. An account of him is given in James Brinsley-Richards' *Seven Years at Eton* (1883), an excellent and faithful record which completely covers my own schooltime.

Various causes contributed to the revival of swordsmanship in the last twenty years of Queen Victoria's reign. Certain cavalry regiments kept up a sound tradition of the sabre, notably the Second Life Guards, in which my master, Waite, had been Corporal-Quartermaster. Sword exercise naturally came to the front in the Peninsular War time, just when the small-sword was on the decline, and the second Angelo (Henry) left his mark on it. As instructor to the Light Horse Volunteers of London and Westminster, he brought out a notable book, *Hungarian and Highland Broadsword* (1799), dedicated to the commanding officer, Col. Herries, my maternal great-grandfather. Its principal distinction is not the text, but the series of spirited coloured plates by Rowlandson, in which the Light Horse Volunteer appears as discomfiting French troopers in fantastic uniforms; in the background of one plate we see a squadron galloping up a hill without any visible support to capture a fort on the summit.

The arm is the European light cavalry sword of the period, of which I have a specimen, copied, it seems through Hungary, from the Indian talwár which has persisted through centuries; the curve is too great for any effective use of the point. At least one of the movements shown—a hanging guard to the right, from which the return was a reverse cut at the right side of the adversary's

head, sweeping round one's own—would be impossible with a longer or heavier blade. Now we have come back to a straight blade—in fact the single-edged rapier of the seventeenth century—designed chiefly for pointing. As long ago as 1880 Corporal-Quartermaster Waite, in his *Lessons in Sabre*, etc., called attention to the importance of the point, and the benefit to be gained by sabre players from acquaintance with the small-sword. At this day it is common for amateurs to be familiar alike with the foil, *épée de combat*, and sabre, though usually with a preference for one of them, and the three weapons are regularly associated in club matches and public competitions.

Although the singlestick is now superseded as the regular foil of the sabre, it does not follow that it is wholly obsolete. Besides the old English 'backswording,' in which, notwithstanding the name and the probable historical connection with the eighteenth-century prize fights, the stick does not pretend to represent a sword, the singlestick may still give good sport in places where there is no regular school of arms. I know of one singlestick club, founded a few years ago, which flourishes in a British garrison beyond seas. The play is a simplified cutting sabre play, the point being for good reasons not admitted.

The popular English taste for downright blows is very old; it survived in an undercurrent all through the growth of modern fencing. We read in the *Tatler* of May 18, 1710:

When I first began to learn to push [that is, use the point] my master had a great deal of work upon his hands



to make me unlearn the postures and motions which I had got, by having in my younger years practised back-sword, with a little use of the single falchion [a curved blade]. Knock down, was the word in the civil wars ; and we generally added to this skill the knowledge of the Cornish hug, as well as the grapple, to play with hand and foot. By this means, I was for defending my head when the French gentleman was making a full pass at my bosom ; insomuch that he told me I was fairly killed seven times in one morning, without having done my master any other mischief than one knock on the pate. This was a great misfortune to me. . . .

The essay rambles off, in the fashion of the time, to censure of parents' and schoolmasters' blunders in general. But I decline to believe, if such was the writer's meaning, that Cromwell's troopers had no skill with the point.

Another road to revived interest in the sword was the antiquarian study of arms and armour in general, which in the latter half of the nineteenth century was rescued from a somewhat amateurish and uncritical state. The names of the late Lord Dillon (who put the Tower armouries in proper order and incidentally detected not a few forgeries) and Baron de Cosson stand out among the pioneers. Obviously defensive armour cannot be understood without knowing what kind of attacks it was designed to meet. I cannot say whether many students of armour and weapons have been led by their study to become swordsmen, but I have no doubt that their work was a contributing cause in the revival.

When I left Cambridge in 1868 I had acquired the rudiments of fencing at the gymnasium then

lately set up by the Passingham brothers; they were intelligent men and active all round (later they took to mountaineering), and their fencing, though secondary to gymnastics, was by no means bad. But Waite, to whose school of arms I attached myself on settling in London, was my first serious instructor. His master was Pierre Prévost, father of the more eminent Camille who for many years was at the head of the French teachers. Camille, then very young in the profession, was a frequent visitor at Waite's rooms and gave me lessons, and very good ones, which I suppose were among his earliest: the father, then an old man and retired, I saw once. So I started under good auspices, and it was a good company of amateurs too. Craufurd Grove, afterwards one of the explorers of the Caucasus and president of the Alpine Club, 1884-1887, was one of them, and W. B. Coltman, afterwards prominent in the Inns of Court school of arms and commanding officer of the I.C.R.V., was another. Waite's especial weapon was the sabre, and he did not acquire enough lightness of hand to compete with good French professionals in foil play (there was no talk as yet of the *épée de combat*, with which he might have done better). But that did not prevent his lessons with the foil from being thoroughly sound and profitable. The method was Prévost's, which, as continued by Camille Prévost, still has a few exponents of its peculiarities—but I must not wander into technical details which would be out of place here. Camille's treatise, *L'escrime et le duel* (1891), is a classic, and was translated for

the English volume on fencing in the Badminton series. Mimiagne, who for many years was the chief instructor of the London Fencing Club, was Prévost's pupil ; his lessons were of almost austere simplicity, but thoroughly efficient.

The merits of fencing for men who have much sedentary work and not too much time for recreation have often and justly been extolled. One of them is that it is a perfectly concentrated form of exercise, not only working body and limbs harmoniously and intensely, but sweeping cobwebs out of the brain by making it impossible to think of anything else for the moment. Another is that it can be practised even in old age well enough to give much pleasure to an ancient fencer and even a little to his opposites. Fingers retain their activity not only with the pen but with the foil, and if old feet are slower than young ones experience goes far to compensate for loss of quickness. All which I assert with confidence as being, I believe, the oldest practising member of the London Fencing Club.

Moreover, fencing leads to two excellent hobbies, both inexhaustible—the study of its literature and the study of the sword in actual specimens. It is pleasing to an English amateur to think that, although we are poor in books of technical instruction as compared with the French, we make more than a respectable show in the history and bibliography of the art. Egerton Castle's *Schools and Masters of Fence* is a classic not likely to be superseded ; its few mistakes are concerned for the most part with books which the author was

unable to examine for himself. Captain Hutton's various writings are a little too anecdotic and desultory for a precise antiquary, but they contain much good information. And if ever any two men were qualified by practical trial to write about the use of the sword from the beginning of schools of fence to the present day, they were those two constant allies Hutton and Castle. On the practical side we now have an English work of original merit, in the French school of course but not derived from any particular French master, F. C. Reynolds's *The Book of the Foil* (1931). The sword itself has interested me ever since I took up fencing, and by keeping my eyes open, without systematic search for which I had not the time, I have acquired a small selection which is fairly representative, and I may say the same as to books. I fear both books and weapons are harder to come by than they were in my youth, but I am sure that a patient and vigilant amateur in either line may in course of time do enough, without excessive cost, to please both himself and judicious friends of like taste. He may likewise have the enjoyment, if he lives long enough, of getting unexpected light after many days on details to which he had no clue. My very earliest specimen was a Persian blade offered for sale in Waite's rooms, with no history of any kind known to the last owner (either he or some former one had barbarously mounted it in an European hilt, which I had no scruple in replacing by one of the proper immemorial pattern). The inscription, read for me by a friend who knew Persian well,

shows the signature of Asad-ullah of Isfahán, a renowned craftsman of the eighteenth century, and the name of the owner, Sarkár Mir Ali Múrad Khán, which conveyed nothing to my friend though he was familiar with Persian names. But only a few years ago I showed this blade to the Nawáb of Dera Ismail Khán, who at once identified the owner as a magnate of his own country, the chief of Khairpur in Sind in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, a noted sportsman and collector of arms. Incidentally it appeared that the descendants of Asad-ullah, who must then have been deceased for some time, continued to use his signature as the trade mark of the business. Such things may seem to some readers the mere driest dust of antiquaries ; but not to you, my grandson, if you grow up, as I hope you may, in the fellowship of those who would walk ten mile afoot to see a good armour. As for the little matter of breaking a recent and ill-assorted union of blade and handle, be it remembered, if excuse is needed, that by reason of breakages and changes of fashion remounting was a constant occurrence when swords were in practical use. I have a walking sword of the transition period—Queen Anne's reign or maybe a little earlier—whose blade is plainly an old rapier blade cut down. The owner thought it a pity that his father's—or maybe grandfather's—good sword should rust, and resolved to wear it at the cost of shortening, with a handle of the new fashion. And pray how do you know it was not a dealer's fake ? says you. First, because not even any moderately ignorant dealer would be quite

such a fool as to spoil a genuine rapier blade ; but chiefly because the mounting is workmanlike and has every appearance of being contemporary with the hilt, and (to me the most convincing proof) the sword balances properly. With books one cannot have just that kind of amusement, but one may have odd surprises with catalogues. Once I sent for a pamphlet described simply as *Fencing*, which turned out to be a polemic against Jesuit casuistry. Then one may have the fearful joy (common, however, to all branches of bibliography) of hunting elusive phantoms of books that never lived but in the imagination of some careless old writer. To talk of swordsmanship in fiction would carry us too far afield. But you will enjoy Dumas' and Théophile Gautier's duels the better if you know what they are talking about.

Concerning pastimes and exercises in which I have little skill or none, I leave you to learn them from those who know them better than I do : not to say that you may have the choice of some not known to my generation at all. It seems possible that there may be in your time a pure sport of flying without mechanical motive power, a pure sport I say because I conceive it can have no commercial or warlike use, and all the better so. Golf I presume will still flourish, but who knows what its future refinements and controversies may be ? And so I make an end of this grandfatherly chatter, wishing you all health and prosperity both at work and at play, and a more settled world than this which I have lived to

## TRAVEL AND RECREATION

see and doubt living to see the way out of—  
a way which you may not come too late to help  
in finding, for the business is neither easy nor  
short.

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